MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

November
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TOP 10

For what it's worth, here're some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

GRACE AMBROSE

- UNA BÉSTIA INCONTROLABLE – Nou Món 45
- FRAU – Punk Is My Boyfriend EP
- PLASTIX – Konsumier Mich EP
- COLD CIRCUITS – Out of Hat Yai LP
- THE NUMBERS ONES – LP
- THE LOWEST FORM / PIG DNA – live
- IVY – LP / CRIME – Murder By Guitar LP
- NEGATIVE SCANNER – Ambitious People EP
- THE WIPERS – Nome Noma/Bowery Boy 45
- VIDEO – Cult of Video/City of Hate 45

LYDIA ATHANASOPOULOU

- P.I.G.Z. – Bloody Belgium EP
- UNA BÉSTIA INCONTROLABLE – Nou Món 45
- GLUE – Enemy EP
- ARREST – La Poli Bastarda EP
- P.F. COMMANDO – LP & Rough Sound EP
- XYMOX – Subsequent Pleasures 12"
- THE WIPERS – Nome Noma/Bowery Boy 45
- BLOOD ROBOTS – LP / AJAX – EP
- MICHAEL PSYCHO – LP / CRIME – LP
- THE LOWEST FORM / PIG DNA – live

MATT BADENHOP

- MÜLLTÜTE / STERILE MIND – live
- BLOOD ROBOTS – LP / PANKRTI – EP
- ARREST – La Poli Bastarda EP
- PLASTIX – Konsumier Mich EP
- FLACCID – Scumbag EP
- FRAU – Punk Is My Boyfriend EP
- REPLICA / NATURE BOYS – live
- AJAX – Bleach for Breakfast EP
- XYMOX – Subsequent Pleasures 12"
- SIAMESE TWINS – Still Corner LP

WILL BLOMQUIST

- SLAG – Mind Slave EP / INSTITUTE – Giddy Boys EP
- XYMOX – Subsequent Pleasures 12"
- BLOOD ROBOTS – LP / DEPARTURE KIDS – LP
- EXECUTIVE SLACKS – 12"
- PROTES BENGT– In Bengt We Trust EP
- THE WIPERS – Nome Noma/Bowery Boy 45
- KNARK / KRÜGER – split EP
- OVENS – Feel Like Shit EP
- FRAU – Punk is My Boyfriend EP
- POIKKEUS / SBSM – live

MITCH CARDWELL

- CRIME – Murder By Guitar LP
- ARNDALES – Dog Hobbies USA LP
- MICHAEL PSYCHO – Think LP
- P.I.G.Z. – Bloody Belgium EP
- GOLDEN PELICANS – LP
- TIMMY VULGAR – The Best 45
- BILDERS – Utopians EP
- P.F. COMMANDO – Rough Sound EP + LP
- MEATBODIES / WAND – split EP
- INTELLIGENCE – Boredom and Terror 2xLP

ROBERT COLLINS

- IRON LUNG – Savagery EP / RORT – Warpath LP
- VEUVE SS – O.P.L.T. & O.S.C. EP
- MÜLLTÜTE – live / THE LOWEST FORM – live
- UNA BÉSTIA INCONTROLABLE – Nou Món 45
- ARREST – EP / MY MAN MIKE – live
- WEAK LINK – Original Position EP
- PATHETIC HUMAN – Public Disgrace EP
- TØRSÖ – Community Psychosis EP
- ANOPHELI – cassette / SPERM – both demos
- ROCHELLE ROCHELLE – cassette

LAYLA GIBBON

- MYSTIC INANE – Deep Creep EP / FRAU – Punk.. EP
- CRIME – Murder By Guitar LP
- IVY – LP / UNA BÉSTIA INCONTROLABLE – Nou Món 45
- THE WIPERS – Nome Noma/Bowery Boy 45
- MICHAEL PSYCHO – Think LP
- EXECUTIVE SLACKS – 12"
- PLASTIX – Konsumier Mich EP
- COLD CIRCUITS – LP / SIAMESE TWINS – LP
- BIG BOYS – No Matter… LP
- TESTORS – Complete Recordings 1976–1979 2xLP

DAN GOETZ

- BIG BOYS – No Matter How Long The Line… LP
- PROTES BENGT – In Bengt We Trust EP
- THE WIPERS – Nome Noma/Bowery Boy 45
- JAWBREAKER – 24 Hour Revenge Therapy LP
- TØRSÖ – Community Psychosis EP
- MYSTIC INANE – Deep Creep EP
- FRAU – Punk Is My Boyfriend EP
- UNA BÉSTIA INCONTROLABLE – Nou Món 45
- VIDEO – Cult of Video 45 / BLACK WINE – LP
- AJAX – EP / OVENS – Feel Like Shit EP

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

GREG HARVESTER

- UNA BÉSTIA INCONTROLABLE – Nou Món 45
- MYSTIC INANE – Deep Creep EP
- IRON LUNG – Savagery EP
- OVENS – Feel Like Shit EP
- PLASTIX – Konsumier Mich EP
- COLD CIRCUITS – Out of Hat Yai LP
- VIOLENT CHANGE – Celebration of Taste LP
- FRAU – Punk Is My Boyfriend EP
- NERV – live / NATURE BOYS – live
- REDBERRIES – live

KENNY KAOS

- PAIN DIMENSION – Brainwash EP
- CHEAP RIOT – 45
- IMPO AND THE TENTS – Peek After A Poke LP
- DEPARTURE KIDS – On the Go LP
- TESTORS – Complete Recordings... 2xLP
- ADVLTS – Raw Nerves EP
- WILD BILLY CHILDISH & CTMF – 45
- THE NUMBER ONES – LP
- THE GAGGERS – Sharp Lies/Hostage 45
- GOOCH PALMS – live

CAROLYN KEDDY

- ZENTRALHEIZUNG OF DEATH – LP
- FRAU – Punk Is My Boyfriend EP
- WILD BILLY CHILDISH & CTMF – Zero Emission 45
- SONIC CHICKEN 4 – LP / PANKRTI – EP
- CRIME – Murder By Guitar LP
- PLASTIX – Konsumier Mich EP
- ARNDALES – Dog Hobbies USA LP
- THE GOTOBEDS – Poor People Are Revolting LP
- DRUGS DRAGONS – II & I/II LP
- BATTERED BASTARDS OF BASEBALL – film

RAY LUJAN

- BLESSED STATE – Head Space 12"
- COPYRIGHTS – Report CD
- CRIME – Murder By Guitar LP
- DEPARTURE KIDS – On The Go LP
- HIP PRIESTS – Black Denim Blitz CD
- IMPO AND THE TENTS – Peek After A Poke LP
- THE NUMBER ONES – LP / TESTORS – LP
- SONNY VINCENT & SPITE – Spiteful CD
- THE MEMBERS – live / GBH – live
- DIRECT HIT! – live

FRED SCHRUNK

- THE WIPERS – Nome Noma/Bowery Boy 45
- PLASTIX – Konsumier Mich EP
- FRAU – Punk Is My Boyfriend EP
- PANKRTI – Lepi In Prazni EP
- SIAMESE TWINS – Still Corner LP
- VIOLENT CHANGE – Celebration of Taste LP
- COLD CIRCUITS – Out of Hat Yai LP
- OVENS – Feel Like Shit EP
- IVY – LP
- CRIME – Murder By Guitar LP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- NEGATIVE SCANNER – Ambitious People EP
- FLACCID – Scumbag EP
- UNA BÉSTIA INCONTROLABLE – Nou Món 45
- PILLAGE – Demo 2013 EP
- XYMOX – Subsequent Pleasures 12"
- GLUE – Enemy EP
- AJAX – Bleach For Breakfast EP
- INSTITUTE – Giddy Boys EP
- FRAU – Punk Is My Boyfriend EP
- MICHAEL PSYCHO – Think LP

DIANA VASHTI

- JAWBREAKER – 24 Hour Revenge Therapy LP
- UNA BÉSTIA INCONTROLABLE – Nou Món 45
- CRIME – Murder By Guitar LP
- SIAMESE TWINS – Still Corner LP
- FRAU – Punk is My Boyfriend EP
- THE WIPERS – Nome Noma/Bowery Boy 45
- MYSTIC INANE – Deep Creep EP
- COLD CIRCUITS – Out of Hat Yai LP
- XYMOX – Subsequent Pleasures 12"
- STATIC IS A CITY – Recidivist Mantras/The Hive 45

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Artcore* #32
- *Blotchouts*
- *Born Into This* #1
- *Cognitive Surplus*
- *Danger Unheard*
- *First Tour Problems* #1
- *General Speech Omnibus* Vol. 2
- *Imantzine* #1 + #2
- *The Match* #113
- *Mishap* #33

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#186/November '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#188/January '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/February '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/March '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#195/August '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#197/October '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, GOre Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#234/Novomber '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235 December '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war Scene Reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in IRaq," "Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/January '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/March '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/April '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Mortícia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, Trust zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto//Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, Portland, Boston & Germany Scene Reports.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04. The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, Al, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Masssgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/Sept. '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, Baboon of Sickness zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjertestop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, Trust fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Plovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (Avow zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, We're Gonna Fight zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?. the Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas,Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown,Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids. Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault. Fuera De Linea

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore

#322/March '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta

#323/April '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial,, Kleenex/ Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nü Sensae, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans and Calgary scene reports.

#327/August '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#328/Mocktober '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic Scene Reports. Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#330/November '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholen, Ireland Scene Report.

#333/February '11. The Welders, Touch & Go Fanzine, Rai Ko Ris, Dolly Mixture, Hitman, Straight Arrows, Eskapo Phillippines Tour Diary, Venezuela Scene Report, Olympia Scene Report.

#334/March '11. 2010 Year End Top Tens, A State of Mind, Useless Children, Straight Arrows, Sober Living for the Revolution, DC Scene Report.

#335/April '11. Siege, Crazy Spirit, 1981, Mauser, Devour, Icon Gallery, Sunshine SS, Timmy's Organism, Whitney House, Attention Span, Michigan Scene Report.

#336/May '11. Kriegshög, Steve Ignorant, Teargas, Tantrum, Hygeine, Shoppers, Chris Walter, Adrenalin OD, Spastic Panthers, Hungarian Scene Report.

#337/June '11. Destroy All Movies, John Morton/ Electric Eels, White Fence, Ydinperhe, Nux Vomica, Vanya Bonecrusher, Black Feet, Uzi Rash, This is LA not L.A.: '80s Hardcore Flyers in New Orleans, Buffalo NY Scene Report.

#339/August '11. Head Cleaners, Midnite Snaxxx, Cocskar, Small Bones, Xcentric Noise records, Grown Ups, Youth Avoiders, Tomek Lipinski/ Brygada Kryzys, Afternoon Gentlemen, Czech Punk History Part 2.

#340/September '11. Demokhratia, GG King, Ivan Brun, B-Lines, State Poison, Jeremy Hush, Love Triangle, Deaf Club Oral History, Czech Punk History Part 3.

#341/October '11. Brian Walsby, Plates, Decraneo, Diet Cokeheads, Royal Headache, Ed Nasty & the Dopeds, Black Mamba Beat Tour of South Africa, Unfit Scum, Mongrel Zine.

#342/November '11. Kyushu Noisecore Summit, Brown Sugar, Vapid, No Rest, Brain Killer, Roach Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires & Graces.

#343/December '11. Porkeria, Descarados, Peace or Annihilation, E.A.T.E.R., Poly Styrene, Severence Package, Katorga Works, Unwanted Christmas Presents, Resist Her Transistor.

#344/January '12. OBN IIIS, Social Chaos, Neo Cons, Alice Bag, Vaginors, Blookrow Butcher, Wartorn, Shitty Limits Last Show Report, Wretched, Zero Progress Tour Diary part 1, Means to an End Fest, Slick 46, Toughskins, No Gods No Matresses Zine.

#345/February '12. 2011 Year End Top Tens, Big Eyes, Terrible Feelings, Zero Progress Tour Report Part 2, the Unruled, Rapid Loss.

#346/March '12. Bärchen und die Milchbubies, Who Killed Spokey Jacket, Krömosom Tour of Japan, Globsters, Nigh Birds, Tribal War, Give Praise records, Refuse records.

#347/April '12. Ron Paul Special Issue, Carburetor Dung, Dark Times, Neon Piss, Kruel, Lapinpolthajat, Criminal Code, Slice Harvester Zine, Iron hand, Indigesti, Damnable Excite Zombies, Hawaii Scene Report.

#349/June '12. Omegas, Zyanose, Antisect, Negative Standards, No Statik, Your Pest Band, Eutanasia, Appalachian Terror Unit, Power Age, Inly Fumes and Corpses, Skizophrenia, David Ensminger, Greek Scene Report.

#350/July '12. The Photo Issue: Justine Demetrick, Ricky Adam, Jeanne Hansen, Don Pyre, Chis Boarts Larsen, Maria de Piedade Morais.

#351/August '12. 30th Anniversary Issue: MRR's Worst & Best, the Tim Yo Covers & Greentaping, Napalm Raid, God Equals Genocide, Stressors, American Sun, Ferocious X, Stripmines, Skitsystem, Juan y Diégo, Banran.

#352/September '12. Stagnation, Luta Armada, Vaarallinen, Frozen Teens, Brain Slug, Noisecore Roundtable #2, Kohosh, Kvoteringen, Gritos de Resistencia, Alabaster Choad, Dipers, Murder in the Front Row, Support NYC.

#353/October '12. Brain Tumors, Effluxus, Anti Cimex, the Cravats, Unlearn, Warsong, Sick/Tired, To Live A Lie records, Stories from the Peruvian Underground Part 1, Bad Daddies, Imminent Destruction records with Lastly, Desperdicio, Against the Grain, Disturd.

#354/November '12. Replica, Ancient Filth, Synthetic 1D, Maximo Volumen, O Inimigo, the Splits, Ohmwar, Beatrap, Victims Tour Diary Part 2, Girth records.

#357/February '13. Forward, Hounds of Hate, Contorture, Kicker, Nothing, Lunatic Fringe, Detonate records, Beatnik Termites, Detroit scene report.

#358/March '13. 2012 Year End Top Tens, Brontez Purnell, Potty Mouth, Nitad, Schizophazia, East Anglia scene report.

#359/April '13. Sickoids, Hassler. Divorce. Cancer Spreading. la Flingue. the Line. White Murder, the Paper Bags versus the Meat Sluts. Greenville, SC scene report.

#360/May '13. Stress, Proxy, the Kids, Kalte Lust, HIRS, Autonomy, Nuclëar Fröst, Dead Air Studio, Blood Orange Infoshop, Death Traitors, Elks Lodge Massacre Revisited.

#361/June '13. Organize and Arise, Fear of Extinction, The Rats Tour Diary, Kathleen Hanna, The Shorts, Hard Feelings, No Power, Melusaaste, We Got Power Zine Part I.

#362/July '13. Jeff Paul, Trust Zine, Shaved Women, Hondartzako Hondakinak, Kurraka, Born Wrong, Homicide, United Arab Emirates & Toronto, Canada scene reports, We Got Power Zine Part II..

#363/August '13. Las Otras, Toinen Vaihtoehto zine, Sudor, Terveet Kädet, Black & White, Stillsuit, Taquila Mockingbird, Arturo Vega, Ruined Families, Baitline!!! zine, R.O.T.T.E.R., No Mistake, Siren Songs, Yorba Linda, CA scene report.

#364/September '13. Last Chaos, Snob Value, NE! Records, RAD, Asile, Whatever Brains, The New Flesh, Trashies, Forgotten Generation, Nightfall/ Population Zero, Texas Filth Scene Report.

#365/Ocotber '13. Condition Tour Diary, Zudas Krust, Doomed Society Radio, Kontrasekt, Bib Black Cloud, Hero Dishonest, Violent Party, Helvetin Viemärit, Malcolm, Clearview Records, Brno, CZ Scene Report.

#366/November '13. Chaos Destroy, Permanent Ruin, Thisclose, Halsey Swain, Rosa Apatrida, No More Fiction, Räjäyttäjät, Nudes, Tarantuja, Destruye y Huye, Vertical House Records, Punk Photo Roadtrip.

#367/December '13. The Mob, Creem, Gag, generacion Suicida, Good Throb, Force Fed Drugs, Total Trash, Life Chain, Concrete Worms, War// Plague, Julia Ostertag, Bad American.

#368/January '14. Queer Issue with Anti-Corpos, Shopping, Glory Hole, Porcelain, Strong Boys, Ejaculoid, Closet Burner, Peeple Watchin', Samuel Shanahoy, Dures et Gays, Priests, Groke, Screaming Queens tour diary, Queer Zine Fest London, International Queer Scene Report.

#369/February '14. Dezerter, Arctic Flowers, Stoic Violence, Strange Factory, Gobierno Militar, Poliskitzo, Voight-Kampff, Rat/Xerox, Nü-kle-er Blast Suntan.

#370/March '14. Year End Top Tens, Nervosas, Komplikations, Mallwalkers, New Orleans punk documentary Almost Ready.

#371/April '14. Bill Bondsman, Crapoulet Records, O! Kult, Rational Animals, Stab, Woolf, Varix, New York's Alright Fest, Miami Scene Report.

#372/May '14. EU's Arse, Siege, XAXAXA, Razorcake, Alert! Alert! Space Wolves, Rhythm of Cruelty, Straight Crimes, PMMA, Strange Attractor, Revenge of the Psychotronic Man, Scotland Scene Report.

#373/June '14. Anti You, Crusades, Rat Damage, Hank., Cottaging, Pesadilla, Distopika, Fed Up Fest, Damn Broads, Destry Hampton, Ben Snakepit & Mitch Clem, Los Culitos, The Lowest.

#374/July '14. No Babies, Grand Collapse, Gulag Beach, 1984, Quaaludes, Ausmuteants, Countdown to Armageddon, Wañuy, Fear of the Future, Bishops Green, Colombia Scene Report, Igor Vidmar, Endless Grinning Skulls.

#375/August '14. Una Béstia Incontrolable, Eiefits, Extreme Noise Records, Vertigo, Glue, S.U.S, Svin: Leningrad Punk Progenitor, Thee Mighty Fevers, Cool Death Records, Miscalculations, Born Wrong Tour Diary.

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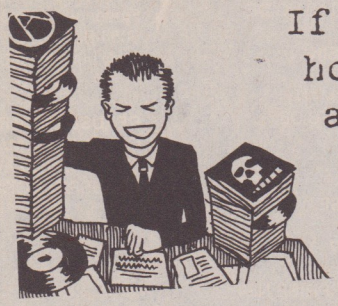

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Hey friends—

I stated as fact, in my *MRR* #375 column, that Hannibal Shakur participated in the massive Trayvon Martin protests in Oakland on July 13-15, 2013. I was wrong. I do not know who did or did not participate in those actions. I am reprinting one of the more eloquent takedowns of my column below, without further comment.

—"Lefty" Hooligan

Another thing. I'm imagining sitting in a room with all of this conversation going down. I'm reading a book that no one seems to have ever heard of in a quiet corner. Some dude rips it out of my hands and says, 'You're reading Gerald Horne! You're not an anarchist! You don't know what you're doing!'

I think to myself, in this imaginary moment, that whoeverthefuck, that guy who just ripped the book from my hands, must have just crawled out of a time capsule. I think I should be patient and hold his hand and gently outline for him what has gone down and what has continued to pass for the last several hundred years, leading to now—2014. I tell him that here in this part of the globe, people are still starving, are still being beaten and killed—oftentimes just because they exist. I tell him that he will emerge from his capsule and that he will move through the world and if his skin is not considered to be 'white' by people who don't know him, that he is in danger every second of his life because this is what has been occurring and what continues to occur.

I'm still imagining his imaginary face, so I tell him what I believe; people should be free to make their own decisions about their own lives without repression; that no power should hinder their ability to live without suffering, because that's what I believe (in a nutshell). For some strange reason I want to show him what I mean. I want to walk down a street with him at night and I imagine that he would be totally invisible and he would see how I'm treated and how others are treated and how we treat each other and he would know what I mean.

As I think about how much time this would take, to really see how far the breach of white supremacy is, I recognize that at this point in time he would have already sought out many books by academicians who wish to shape his mind and the minds of others with stories and theories of old. They say, 'Back in the 19th century, this is how people chose to think, and so we will hold their thoughts with the utmost fidelity, never questioning how or if we can apply their thoughts to what is happening now. We will only revisit the past when it affirms our collective right to radical thinking.' In this imagination, is he *questioning who is a revisionist and who is thinking in the now? He doesn't really know, and how could he? He's only recently emerged and his head has been buried in the dusty chapters of by-gone revolutionaries who at once mattered and then ceased to exist. If he never lifts his head from pure theory, he will probably never truly exist in the world as it is now for those of us who do not have the luxury to simply exist.*

I take a deep breath. I'm exhausted. I have to stop imagining. I think about this ambling thread. I realize that many of these folks have never had to second-guess their thoughts or beliefs. I don't have all day to write and cite and write again.

I wake up and remember that what I did was write a response to a column I found dangerous and egregious, and rather than discuss the points made in my paltry letter, folks would rather re-hash and re-write history, all the while avoiding the multiple premises of my letter, which of course makes me feel like I should continue to clarify my points:

In the 21st century, within the borders of the so-called US, Black and Brown people are incarcerated, beaten and/or killed because "society" basically thinks that they are less than people. While an ethos of color-blindness can be considered admirable, it is delusional. Even Black and Brown people view each other with suspicion and derision because the dominant cultural norms dictate that we are dangerous, uncivilized, and should be caged. I refer to the footnotes of history for a deeper study in the ways and means by which people considered as non-white have been subjugated by the state.

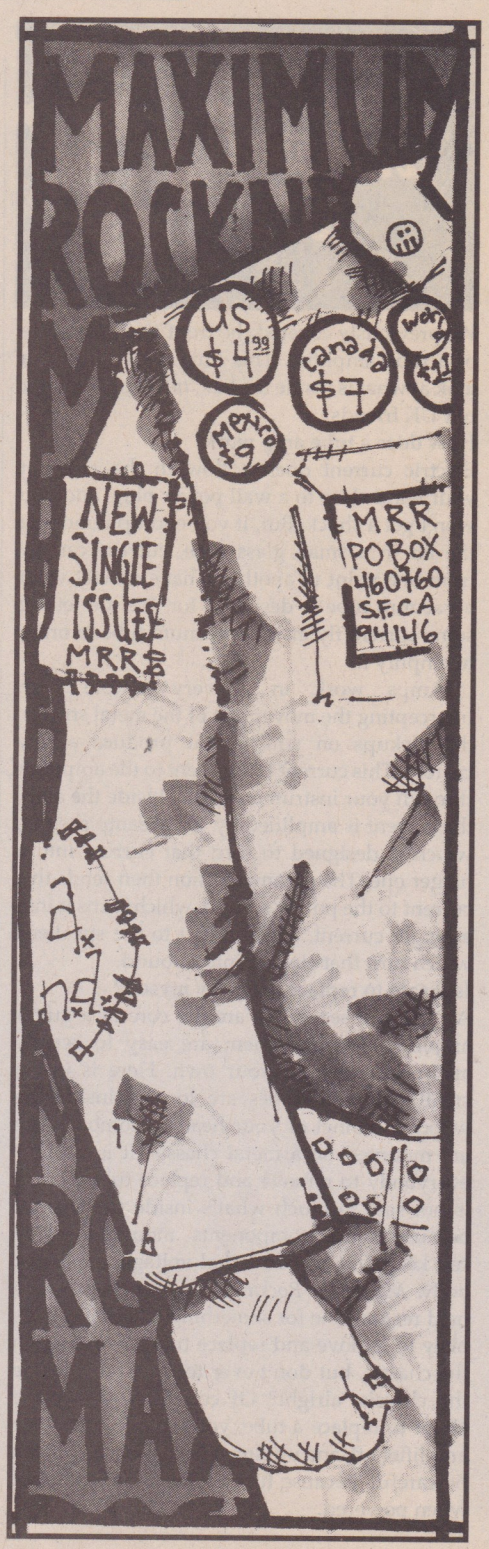
Another point that I made is that writing a column in a widely read magazine, which states (not supposes, not imagines, not wonders) that a Black man participated in a riot and attempted to physically harm another person is irresponsible. The reason that this is irresponsible is that the state—the current state, not the theoretical one—has been persecuting, lynching, jailing and killing Black people since its inception in order to maintain an order of white supremacy and free-market capitalism. This is not a theory, this is a reality. The state has never hesitated to use whatever it can find to implicate Black people in crimes in which the state then uses as an excuse to confine or kill them—all for the purpose of making money. Implicating Black people in state-defined crimes in order to make a political point serves the state and keeps all of the masses in line, absolutely.

Lefty Hooligan attempted to define the discourse about leftist separatism on the backs of Black and Brown people, naming as hero Lawrence Jarach and as foe, 'people from Qilombo.' In doing so, he also attempted to passively paint 'people from Qilombo' as not anarchist enough while painting Lawrence Jarach and his 'post-leftists' as somewhat closer to the real deal. This is not necessarily important in the grand scheme of things. His analogies (using pieces of the history of Maximum Rocknroll*) were aimed at a particular crowd. Over all, I deduced that his writing reflected modes of Eurocentrism, which I interchange with white supremacy.*

I related the anecdote about 'burning all churches, even Black churches' because it was glossed over in Lefty Hooligan's column. I did not intend to defend Christianity on any level. I said that Black churches could be sanctuaries for people within Black communities when they needed respite from white influence. I did not say, at any point, that Christian practices in Black churches are in any way practical, useful, or revolutionary. I do not conflate Black churches with the practices of Christianity.

I'm tired and going to bed now.

—Melissa/Shakes



COLUMNS

We previously covered the front and back plate of a tube amplifier. This time we will have a look at what is inside the box: *tubes* (or *valves* for our UK friends).

How does a tube amp work?

Electric current doesn't flow in the air—put your hand close to a wall power plug, and you won't get a shock. But, if you end up removing the air in a small glass tube, current can fly from one point to another. That's exactly what a vacuum tube is designed for. We are letting some current fly inside a vacuum tube in order to amplify it.

Amps work in a very simple way. Intercepting the movement of the metal strings, the pickups on your guitar produce a tiny current. This current is then sent to the amplifier through your instrument cable. Inside the amp, the current is amplified by the preamp section, which is designed to turn that current into a bigger one. The preamp section then sends this current to the power section, which turns it into a bigger current, and sends it to the speakers, which turn that current into a sound.

Is it safe to replace tubes by myself?

As you can see, tubes are the core of a guitar amplifier. Most of them are easy to service and replace by on your own. Here is just a small reminder: tubes are located inside the wooden cabinet of your head or combo. They are mounted on a metal chassis. It is safe for everybody to remove and replace tubes, but it is not safe to touch what's inside the chassis, because some components mounted inside can keep and unload lethal voltages into your body. *Maximum Rocknroll* doesn't want to be held responsible for something like this. So, it's okay to remove and replace tubes mounted on the chassis, but don't ever touch what's inside the chassis, alright? Of course, when you're about to replace a tube, you have to turn your amplifier off, and unplug it from the wall power. Be careful, because tubes tend to be really hot when powered.

But why would I replace tubes in my amplifier?

For the exact same reason that you replace strings on your guitar or bass. You either break one, or find that you don't like the sound coming out of it. Tubes have to be heated in order to work. So if one of your tubes doesn't light up, it is likely that you have to replace it.

When and how often do I have to replace tubes?

It depends on the frequency you're playing your amplifier. If you replace them on a regular basis then power tubes can last approximately from 1 up to 3 years, depending on the bias setting. Preamp tubes usually last twice as long as power tubes. Refer to your ears on when to replace them. If it doesn't sound good enough for you, then it's time to retube.

Alright, but what are preamp tubes?"

It's usually very simple to identify a preamp tube. Most of them are 12AX7. At this point, I'd recommend getting in front of a computer and looking up what a 12AX7 tube is. They all look the same, and they've become a standard in tube amplification.

Preamp tubes are easy to deal with. You can replace them by yourself, whether it's all of them or just one. They don't need any maintenance or service. You can try a couple of different brands in your amplifier without damaging anything. It's all plug and play. You just have to remove it and replace it with another from the same reference—which is usually written on the tube itself. Sometimes you'll see a 12AX7 referred as an ECC83, which is just their British name—but they are exactly the same in the end. There are also a couple of other names for these, like 12AY7 or 12AT7. These variations mean that the tube can produce more or less gain. For example, if you have a tube amplifier that distorts too early for your taste, and that the first preamp tube is a 12AX7, you can replace it with a 12AT7 in order to have a less distorted and cleaner sounding amp.

Here's the preamp tube gain chart:

12AX7 or ECC83 = 100%
5751 = 70%
12AT7 or ECC81 = 60%
12AY7 = 45%
12AU7 or ECC82 = 20%

Preamp tubes can last quite some time. Usually they start to wear out after two or three years. If you're not using your amp on a daily basis, there's no need to rush on changing these tubes, but an upgrade is always recommended. The most important tube being the first one, as it's usually the one that is located the closest to the input jack of your amp. So if you have to try and test some tubes, start with the first one. The others are pretty much slaves to it.

I want to replace my preamp tubes. What do I do?

First you have to turn off your amp, unplug it, and remove the back panel. Then you have to find the small glass tubes that look like mini light bulbs on the chassis. They may or may not be covered with a "tube shield" (search for what a tube shield looks like on the internet). You twist and remove that tube shield. Then you have that little glass tube. You'd better remove it with a cotton cloth, and not with your hands. The preamp tubes aren't locked, you just have to pull them up in a little circular movement. Now that you have the tube in your hand, just look for its reference (12AX7, ECC83, 12AT7, etc.). Find one with the same specs, and then just put your new tube back in with its tube shield upon it. Voila! You're done. Turn the amp on and let's rock'n'roll.

OK, but what are power tubes, then?

As written above, you can replace your preamp tubes by yourself. No need for a tech. Power amp tubes are quite different. Most of the times, you'll find three types of power tubes: 6L6, EL34 and El84. You might also come across some KT66 or KT88, but these are much rarer. Each of these types of tubes have different specs, and none of them work the same way, so, unlike the preamp tubes, you can't mismatch them. You have to use the same kind of tubes. If your amp runs on 6L6, you have to replace them with some other 6L6s, and this applies for every kind of tube amp (with very few exceptions, but I digress).

On the other hand, power tubes can work from two different schemes. They can be cathode biased, or fixed bias. Bias is a big word for nothing that you really need to worry about, but in order to work properly, a tube needs to be biased. Preamp tubes are always cathode biased. Cathode bias is the easiest scheme to deal with. It means that the tubes are automatically biasing themselves. So, if your power amp section is cathode biased, you can replace your power tubes by yourself, like you just did with your preamp tubes.

But the negative side of the cathode bias is that it can deliver only a limited amount of power. You can't usually go over 30 watts. If you have a low wattage amp that is 30 watts or

less, chances are that it is cathode biased.

This is where fixed bias appears. In order to produce more power and go over 30 watts, amp makers use a scheme that splits the signal across 2 or 4 tubes and make them work as a push-pull. This scheme require a fixed bias, which means that you have to set the bias by hand, or sometimes you just can't even set it at all. Most of the 50 or 100 watts amps are fixed bias. This scheme also implies that your tubes must be tested and matched with the same specs in order for both tubes to work together. Basically they have to be twins so they can act the same way. Some amps let you set the bias the way you want—like most Marshalls—and some just absolutely don't—like Mesa/Boogie amps.

Whatever it is, your only choice at this point is to go to a tech and ask him to replace your power tubes and set the bias. Sadly, power tubes last much shorter than preamp tubes. They pretty much need to be replaced once a year if you're using your amp on a daily basis or so. You won't notice a huge difference every day, but they'll wear out little by little every time you're using your amp. They also wear faster depending on the way they are biased.

Bias can be set hot or cold, which means that they can be pushed harder (hot) to provide a better sound but have a shorter lifetime, or softer (cold) which leads to a tamed sound, but tends to come up with a longer lifetime. The trick is to set the bias right in-between in order to get the best sound while maintaining the longest lifetime possible.

I want to replace my power amp tubes. What do I do?

Well, first you have to know if your amplifier's power section is cathode biased or fixed bias. Here are a few hints that might help you figure it out: All amps with one single power tube are cathode biased. Most Vox amps are cathode biased. Marshall amps that are above 30 watts are fixed bias (i.e. the JTM, JMP & JCM series). Most Fender amps are fixed bias. Most amps using 2 or 4 EL34 or 6L6 tubes are usually fixed bias. Most amps using EL84 tubes are cathode biased.

Then, if your amp is cathode biased, follow the exact same procedure as you would for the preamp tubes. Remove, check the type, and replace with one of the same kind.

If your amp is fixed bias, bring it to a tech. You can eventually replace your power tubes by yourself, but you have to purchase a matched pair of tubes, and adjust the bias by yourself, using one or two millimeters and tube bias probes. The bias setting is, most of the times, a small trim pot on the chassis next to the tubes, or inside the chassis. It's really tricky, and could be dangerous if you're messing inside the chassis, but you can learn some way or another. Ask a friend or a tech—some are nice enough to teach you how.

On the other hand, Mesa/Boogie is well known for coming out with fixed bias tube amps that are not adjustable at all. You have to purchase tubes matching the exact same specs than the one you purchased your amp with and it's a pain. You can ask a tech to modify your amp to an adjustable fixed bias.

I'll gladly answer any question, give advice or help if you send me a message here: instrumentsoneohone@gmail.com

I possess bad timing and a slow wit. This is why I write a lot in my room and lean silently against walls in public places. Probably why I drink too much. I think of the right thing to say twenty minutes later.

"The jerk store called. They're running out of *you*!"

I've run out of things to talk about because I got tired of my broken record preaching. I don't want to tell people what to do, I have no answers. And while I was recently a bridesmaid in the wedding of a childhood friend I have also recently memorized the recipe for a microwave brownie in a mug. Does this make me a genius or a loser? Neither? Both? The wedding was almost punk but not. Once I was talking to someone about babies (no fucking clue why) when they said, "You can have babies radically but having a baby is not radical." It was weird, the wedding, kind of weird. The wedding party was freaky for the most part, wedding pictures were taken with animal masks and parasols (do you know how many times you have to fake laugh in an hour?). The ceremony was short, with a ukulele player singing Hawaiian songs. There was a chuppah constructed of Filipino materials, it was officiated by an old San Francisco punk friend of the family, and finished with a breaking of the glass. Platters of lumpia were brought by every relative at every turn, lechón for dinner, no wedding cake just a croquembouche (lovingly referred to by her family as "dick and balls cake").

It was fun to hang out all day drinking mimosas and getting dressed up and having someone else do my hair and makeup, but the moment I turned to see my buddy walk down the aisle I felt reality slip away. I never thought I would witness this, I never thought I would be this. They got engaged and she said they weren't actually ever getting married, it was just fun/funny. Every step was followed by a claim that the next step would never happen (currently there is a "no babies" claim). But here I was, a bridesmaid. I knew/I know I will likely never be in that position again. The whole process brought up every possible square fear that might linger in the back of my brain. I was faced with buying an expensive dress that I may or may not fit into to attend a party filled with a mix of strangers and people I grew up with but hadn't seen in ten-plus years. Every aspect was so bizarre to me; why congratulate someone on finding someone they think they can spend the rest of their lives with and that they're making it real in the eyes of law? This is no individual achievement, it's destiny and luck, maybe some work. And now I'm invited to buy an expensive dress and fancy shoes and devote my whole weekend to celebrate it (life is sooo hard). I got a phone call about a year ago from my friend informing me I had a year to construct a dress from blue satin. A couple months later it turned into "Save some money for an expensive dress." She lives on the east coast and I had to call the east coast and give them my measurements. My measurements put me in either a size sixteen (waist) or twelve (bust). This fact alone somehow made me feel disproportionate and gross. In my life there have only been three points of feeling body weirdness: once when I was spending all of my time with a skinny, giggly bandmate who was mean to me and worshipped by men, another time when I broke out in an insane mystery rash right before a summer tour ("I've never not wanted to take my clothes off!"), and then once when I suddenly faced the possibility that I might have to lose weight to fit into a dress (this is the time I'm talking about). I spent about a month making jokes about being fat until a roommate pointed out how weird it was and I promptly knocked it the fuck off. But my relationship to food got weird. It was already weird because food seems to be the avenue where I fail as an adult. I'll eat entire cities if somebody else is making it or if it's free but somehow I can't get a handle on feeding myself. I once had a roommate tell me my diet was post-apocalyptic because all I ate was canned beans and boxes of macaroni.

I started only eating, as my mother would say, "things that grew out of the ground." Avoiding cheese, avoiding cake, avoiding free food. It became the grossest game ever, how much weight can I lose? 200 sit-ups a day for about a month, and then, you know, I came to my senses and ate some candy.

The dress shop faxed me a contract to sign saying that I was ordering a dress in a smaller size than recommended and that if it didn't fit I couldn't return it. I spent months fearing this dress (you have to order them like six months in advance). This dress, this dress that was inanimate and not even part of my reality, yet was striking fear into my soul. Then I got the actual invitation. Somehow it never occurred to me that I could bring a date. I don't have a partner; do I bring a friend? I was getting stuck on the idea that people would think the friend was a date. But if I didn't bring a date was I a loser? Would I have to rustle up a significant other before the end of July? I spend so much time not giving a shit about what the world thinks of me and this whole thing was catching me in so many ways. Somewhere in here I ended up at a party that was seemingly attended by nothing but couples and babies and I spent the whole time feeling wrong and bad. I don't even want these things. The fuck. I was

eating potato chips on the couch annoyed but also insecure. What the fuck was I doing with my life? Fucking piece of shit trash, you turned thirty-two and gave yourself a stick and poke on the side of your foot in celebration. The fuck.

I decided to go it alone. Go to the wedding alone. The dress arrived on the doorstep (my parents' doorstep, it would get stolen from mine). It looked wide. It was wide. This dress that I was sure I would have to lose weight and wear weird underwear for was too big. My first thought was "Well now I have to gain weight," but then I realized I do possess a sewing machine.

And I just kept thinking, "I have to look super hot, the hottest ever." I have to talk about my life in ways that these squares would understand and admire. Maybe I even want them to be jealous. I gotta try to not look like a trashbag. I went to an establishment to get a haircut. I shaved.

I went to my parent's house a couple days before the party to watch *Family Feud* and eat ice cream (and hang out with them, I like my parents). My friend called at 11:30 pm muttering something about hot glue and to come to her mom's house. Her room was the same as it was ten years ago. My room in my parents' house turned into an office ten minutes after I moved out. When I was twenty-five and briefly moved back in, I slept on a pullout couch next to a computer. I'm standing in this room that I spent so much time in and you still can't see the floor because it's covered in clothes and knick knacks and fake flowers and wires and hot glue guns. She hasn't lived here for ten years.

She gives me a bag of broken jewelry and tiny dinosaurs, saying I had to make a bouquet for myself. As I arm myself with a glue gun she looks at me and says, "We need to dye my hair now". A professional had dyed my hair hours before in a fancy salon where they give you robes and lemonade. Knowing I was getting my hair dyed I instinctually wore one of the plethora of t-shirts I own with shoulders and backs already stained and bleached out. The moment I walked in I realized there was no need, these people don't have dye shirts, they have robes. We dyed her hair in the pristine bathroom at her parent;s house. This is where we grew up. We bleached and dyed everything here for years, we were already adept at minimizing errant blobs of bleach and dye, making sure to stain nothing. Her parents were punks in youth; she doesn't know the Beatles. When X is in town, Exene will come by for dinner. The house looks like a parents' house, or what I think of as a parents' house. The carpet is clean; everything works the way it should. My friend's now-husband is from the east coast, Massachusetts. She called me a couple years ago flipping out because he had asked her parents for permission to ask for her hand in marriage (I think his family is Catholic?) and they blew him off (they are punks). I reminded her where she is from and where she is now. It was just a culture clash. She plays roller derby.

I look like a trash freak and I'm standing next to a pool that I used to dip my legs into while smoking joints and listening to Groovie Ghoulies, Teenage Jesus and Madonna. My friend is freaking out, we are surrounded by tulle and tissue paper and she keeps taking her bouquet apart and starting over. Oh, and also, none of the other bridesmaids have time to finish their bouquets, so what am I up to today? There is a barbeque in honor of the bride and groom, wasn't I supposed to attend that? I'm wearing a bathing suit. She leaves me with piles of stuff and a glue gun.

"We've done this before." True.

She leaves me at her parents' house but I'm not alone. Friends of her parents are wrapping pieces of meat around cheese and putting it on toothpicks, listening to free jazz and drinking beer. They keep on giving me plates of appetizer fuck ups. This is the second time I've hot glued a ribbon to my thigh. One of them is telling me about the other's wedding dress in 1980, white leather/skin tight/mermaid cut. The other (the one whose wedding dress is being described) comments that for what it was it was very tasteful. Somehow they're talking about some NASCAR event that's going all weekend, including an ice cream social at 7 am on Sunday. One of them says it sounds like a Young Marble Giants song and commences singing "Ice cream social at the drag race" in the style of that band. It takes me eight hours to make all of these bouquets and the one for the bride is like five fucking pounds but they look awesome and I got to ditch out on a barbeque with strangers and instead drink beer with some cool ladies and listen to old stories and weird funk (it goes from free jazz to funk).

It's the end of the night and I'm calling my mom to pick me up (the wedding is in the town I grew up in and my parents live in the same house I grew up in). I'm probably drunker than everyone else there but I'm not sure (I'm drunk). There was an open bar without a bartender and I am carrying a half empty bottle of white wine and I refuse to let go. It was surreal to watch my friend walk down the aisle in a wedding dress (she was a crust punk at one time). A moment of bizarre paths, who had their shit together, who didn't, who got their shit together, who didn't, the myriad ways to get shit together. My sister has been a bridesmaid four times in the past two years and this will probably be my one and only. I'm outside next to the mobile photo booth and I'm trying to dance in heels (how do people do this?), I do a lewd gesture (tongue between fingers) for every picture taken after about 10 pm. I look fucking good and the only other person from high school that ends up being there is the second freakiest of the bridesmaids (I'm number one). A shoegaze hit from the '90s plays as the couples sway around me and I text a friend to tell him that I'm in love with him (he doesn't know) but the text is cryptic to the point where it even takes me two months to realize what I was saying (but I meant it) (he knows it now).

I have a friend here visiting from SF whom I won't name. He is really secretive. He used to be in charge of editing the *MRR* book review section and while doing that he also always struggled to get his name out of the list of contributors and shitworkers. The reason why I like spending time with him is that we can have all these serious, nerdy, embarrassing, awkward conversations about punk. International punk conference is on!

We sit around and talk about every aspect of punk—joking, naming bands, discussing ideas and approaches and attitudes in punk, sounds, and the way people relate to music—basically everything connected to this world that is held together by band patches. As we get older, it becomes much more fun, because many times if I stop for a second and try to envision myself from the inside, I can do nothing but laugh. Because, after all, like, who gives a fuck? What we do should be secret, otherwise we will be "thrown into the loony bin" for being obsessed with such a lame topic. But having him around is great, especially in these times where everything in my life is great except for punk.

Not my punk, because it's stronger than ever. I do feel like I'm the last punk, or the last one I know for sure. But it's strange how not so long ago I thought the only thing I was good at was doing my punk and now I'm having success in normal, boring life, with promotions and my company's trust and an increasing salary and a perfect relationship, while I suffered through this year with bands, promoters, clubs, crowds, band members, my own laziness. The other night, we played a show and I seriously had a nervous breakdown in a car (I sounded like Meat Puppets' *In a Car*). If my girlfriend Anna hadn't been there with me to take control and save my ass, some serious shit would have happened. In the end, everything went alright but I'm just done giving blood, sweat, and tears for this thankless job where everybody feels fine and free except me. That's the only thing that matters for me now—I wanna keep my punk as fun as it can be, not a duty I have to serve. Right now I feel like I'm forced into the role of a fool and I'm blamed for everything no matter what I do.

My strategy to survive this is not to fade away or give in and go mainstream (= grow up, get fucked). I'm gonna grow a thick skin. My idea is to go more radical in order to be able to play on my own terms. I'm done being that guy who has to be the only one to solve all the bullshit that could spoil it all at any given time. I'm done with it. To live is to be confused, and

try to fight it a bit, but I do want the privilege to be confused a bit too.

Alright, whining stops here.

Basically, I'm about to establish my one-man secret society. I do other projects with people but I like my punk these days as I shelter my brain and my hours with noise and nerdy punk thoughts, rather than caring about any of the bullshit others create. I wanna fill every one of my hours with good things. It's not some new age hippie bullshit but I don't have time for things that bother me, do something different or shut up. Enough talking about myself. It's not a diary; it should be a diarrhea of amazing sounds.

I still get goosebumps when I blast No Trend while heading to work. That band is just another level of evil awesomeness. Their guitars, the powerhouse restrained grooves, that cynical voice of the singer. Of course pre "we are artists" era. Somehow they sucked at doing that. Not sure why, but America is kind of failing at progressing their ideas. As in, they suck in fabricating World Peace and Freedom version #2, they are also bad when bands like Die Kreuzen and Saccharine Trust figure out they should do something more and go far out into experimenting.

Ruidosa Inmundicia live three hours from my town and it was such a bummer that they had never played here before. They finally did and we had an eventful weekend with them, which was mostly saved by their cool spirit, constant party mode, and the way I was able to get into my meditative state when I shook my head to their crushing sets. Busy minds look around and organize to arise.

I started buying records on instinct and it does not disappoint. Spinning my newly arrived Shoes This High LP is something like next-level punk heaven. They sound evil and noisy and this totally calms me. New Zealand was already good at creating sounds that are hard to pin on an exact emotion but unlike the dreamy sounds, this band brings on the nightmare chills.

Speaking of nightmarish sounds, I just received my Fottutissima Pellicceria Elsa LP, a band that follows no rules. Creativity in total chaos, they make space for guitars to play out whatever they want and these mutant jam sessions placed into raging punk songs are amazing. It's always the best when anger opens a platform for creativity. The live recordings gave an extra flavor to this on the loose sounds, so many layers melting into each other. All in all, it's just a heartfelt record driven by enthusiasm and not giving a fuck at all. So good. They remind me of United Mutation, in a way. A band that is constant in my life—their sound is something I have to give time to every month, sitting down and rediscovering what was hidden in the complex form. Even their band photos contain this mystical magic of mutant minds—there is something else there that is more than life. It feels as if they have figured out what punk should be, then they made it and disappeared. Their cover art, lyrics and everything are just unbelievable.

This approach to punk is a total component of the Vixens LP. Girls from nowhereland playing Void-worship blaspheme punk with a cover and package art that blows my mind. Hope they are still a band, and if not, I hope they are working on new projects with the same quality. This is why I love Hysterics, too. One of the few contemporary bands that doesn't follow the codes and rules that are mistakenly thought to dictate some territories of hardcore punk. I have been sitting on an interview with them for an embarrassingly long time now, but I loved it when they told me how they didn't know the whole history of hardcore punk and that they just simply started playing this amazing blasting music. 'Cause after all, this subculture is for the freaks who would rather have visions and ideas than a codex written in stone. Stones are good for throwing at cops, but you should write to fanzines punx!

Ladies are winning me over this month with their extravagant sounds. I got Sida's 7". No idea about this band but they are probably from Spain or Japan. The record sleeve tells me no info on this (or I wasn't looking closely enough). They play repetitive, feverish paranoid music, something that could be Kim Gordon's revenge on the world; all amps switched on, tuned into the wrong level and just played out at maximum level. Bad trips, evil vibrations, burn your surfboards because even the desert of your mind gets freezing cold at night and you need that extra heat.

For real, everyone out there, do yourself a favor and spend your useless nights in front of your computers checking out new bands. You'll realize punk is this bottomless pool of universal anger and creativity. Just because everyone is bored, talking about cool bands or too clueless to know what is the best shit, there are millions of bands whose existence is forgotten, even by their ex-members, who deserve your attention. The more music you listen to the more you will learn about music, and music is a form of communication so music is basically people.

Ideas.

I could still spend hours thinking about the idea that our society is fucked because we watch each other too much, thus we are afraid to express our true selves because of the fear of failure. On the other hand, in punk everybody is purposely making mistakes, which will later be recorded, archived, consumed, adored, and collected. This is why punk is the best.

There was this old punk guy who said you should start to learn to live for the inside. He might have been right, because those who only care about public stunts are empty as fuck. I can appreciate the results of listening to shitloads of music and reading lots of books and keeping these things for myself. It's not as if I envy my own perfect taste (which is basically developed after reading who says what in this magazine); it's that to get into things and not give a fuck about other people's ideas could benefit you. If you build up your own little world, the outside will never tear you down or let you feel embarrassed or awkward. It's like the Zouo 7". That thing should never have existed at all, because it makes no sense, as to what the meaning was before they released that 7" in question and yet still there is such a document and it's just another perfect example of all the marvels this world can produce.

One night, I had a conversation about the age before everyone was able to learn about anything in seconds and how people then were forced to listen to bands who are now considered ridiculously mediocre, washed out bullshit, but who then sounded interesting because no one knew where they were gaining influence from. One could feel now that one has wasted months or years of one's life on things that are now laughed at by the youngsters. But for me this is another great thing in punk, because this scene is full with fallen idols. Because it proves that nostalgia is only a great excuse for bad taste and laziness. It's not about getting stuck in the past but about always learning new things and picking out the best. There were great bands who either broke up early, or turned into total shit, and there were times when we were just listening to terrible music and luckily we have grown out of it. The present is now and if you feel embarrassed by your past that means you are smarter now.

Also we tend to think that some countries and eras were unable to produce amazing punk bands but for fuck's sake just do what I have told you: sit on your ass and learn about the nonstop coolness of punk if you are a devoted fan. Most likely the harder times with their obscure bands are much more interesting, because they give you that extra flavor of secret society, with their efforts to go against the grain. That's a bit self-indulgent, but come on, there has to be some pleasure even for us.

There is a thing I hate. Hipsters are gone. I thought they were idiots because, for some reason, they felt like they had to adopt everything that seemed cool, and because they were unable to relate to anything but the coolness, they used irony and cynicism to blend in. I hate it when people like a band because that band looked or acted strange. It's their music that's supposed to dominate, not the other bullshit. The Clean looked like total office worker staff and Hoax proved to be more than just a bleeding forehead.

It's pretty tiring that, while I think I'm the lamest person, at the same time people around me force me to feel that what's happening in my surroundings is hip. It is the best thing ever for sure, but it is only so because we know what the worst thing ever is: normal life. What is more normal than to base a subculture on the chase of doing cool things, on worshipping a format over content? I don't like when these normal life things get mixed with my world.

But the fun is over, hipsters have grown up and they have become self-proclaimed experts. Everybody is raving about how much they know about everything and how perfect their taste is and they try to see even listening to music as just a set of rules that could be mastered. While again I feel embarrassed and awkward for not

saying more, and while their life is just this constant self indulgence, mine is working at feeling like shit less. It's that "I know the more I learn the less I know" thing. But at least I know that I'm real and that feels good for sure.

Ferguson, Missouri offers a lesson for those of us who are trying to make life more fair: if you want the powers that be to pay attention, violent protest is more effective than nonviolence.

Race riots following the shooting of an unarmed young black man by a white cop in a suburb of St. Louis dominated newspaper headlines and network news coverage. Federal and state officials took the rare step of chastising local police authorities, with the second-guessing going so far as to include a do-over of the autopsy of the 18-year-old victim, Michael Brown.

Violent demonstrators captured the attention of the Attorney General and the President of the United States, the latter of whom broke away from his vacation to call for both "respect for public order and the right to peaceful public protests." (After his administration's coordination of the brutal crackdown against the peaceful Occupy Wall Street movement, and his decision to shunt marchers at the 2008 and 2012 Democratic National Conventions into distant, hidden, caged "free speech zones," Obama's defense of the right to protest is a startling 180° turn.)

After years of ignoring the problem, we are finally beginning a national conversation about police racial profiling of African-Americans, especially young men. "Driving while black," "stop and frisk," and the militarization of local law enforcement that always seems to fall heaviest against black communities (c.f., New Orleans during Katrina) have gone on for decades — but no one besides blacks seemed to care.

Thanks to Ferguson's rioters, mainstream (white, wealthy) America is questioning those oppressive tactics.

This is a political breakthrough. And it's only happening because people threw Molotov cocktails and rocks, and broke windows and looted, and came out night after night to confront the police even though—arguably *because*—the police were shooting tear gas and rubber bullets at them.

Michael Brown's death fits a standard narrative: *White Policeman Shoots Unarmed Black Youth.* Happens all the time. White cops who kill unarmed black people are rarely charged with a crime; those who get charged are rarely convicted.

As far as I can tell, no white policeman in the United States has ever received a lengthy prison term for killing an unarmed African-American civilian.

Police shootings provoke anger among the black community—and there it remains. This is because black political and religious leaders usually persuade citizens to limit their tactics to peaceful protest.

Peaceful marches don't scare the ruling classes. Which is why they don't lead to meaningful change.

Nonviolent protest was the reaction last month when a NYPD officer killed 43-year-old Eric Garner, suspected of selling untaxed cigarettes, using an illegal chokehold. "We're not gonna start fighting and pushing each other and breaking windows, right?" Garner's mother urged at a rally.

So far, the protesters' decision to respect private property rights has had zero effect. Garner's death was ruled a homicide, yet the cop remains at work and uncharged.

Also in New York, another unarmed 18-year-old, Ramarley Graham, was shot to death by an undercover narcotics officer who broke into his apartment without a warrant in 2012. Protesters adhered to the usual nonviolent tactics. As usual, results were nil. From *The Los Angeles Times:* "A judge threw out a manslaughter indictment against the officer who shot Graham on a technicality. A second grand jury failed to indict the officer, saying there was insufficient evidence to charge him. Graham's family and local lawmakers have called for the Justice Department to investigate."

I'm a white guy, so I don't have to worry about getting shot by cops if I'm in a car accident. As a black man, however, Manuel Loggins, Jr. wasn't so lucky. After Loggins wrecked his SUV, an Orange County sheriff's deputy shot him—he was unarmed—in front of his 9- and 14-year-old daughters because he had a "mean" expression. This was in 2012. Again, there were peaceful protests. As usual, the deputy was not charged.

This is how it *always* goes.

Ferguson's protesters included old-school nonviolent civil rights types as well as younger activists who are fighting back against the police in kind. At a meeting, the *New York Times* reported, "clergy members despaired over the seemingly uncontrollable nature of the protest movement and the flare-ups of violence that older people in the group abhorred." The paper quoted an older man from East St. Louis: "These kids do not understand why the nonviolence movement is the best way to get done what we need to get done."

Given how quickly the young firebrands are getting results, the old folks are the ones who don't understand.

My new book After We Kill You, We Will Welcome You Back As Honored Guests: Unembedded in Afghanistan *is officially out. It's a collection of journalism in comics and words filed from the front lines in Afghanistan. Price is $26; you can order it at any bookstore, or from me directly by going to Rall.com.*

Does "one divide into two" or "two fuse into one?" This question is a subject of debate in China and now here. This debate is a struggle between two conceptions of the world. One believes in struggle, the other in unity. The two sides have drawn a clear line between them and their arguments are diametrically opposed. Thus, you can see why one divides into two.

Free translation from the *Red Flag*, Peking, September 21, 1964
as quoted in Anti-Mass: Methods of Organization for Collectives

One man's cult is another man's PTA.

Okay, so the aphorism needs a little work. What I often call "The Left" is littered with examples of cults, beginning with Lyndon LaRouche's Trotskyist National Caucus of Labor Committees in the 1960s and 70s went on a rampage, called "Operation Mop-Up," of physically attacking fellow left individuals and organizations after the NCLC itself was attacked by Mark Rudd's and Bernadine Dohrn's Revolutionary Youth Movement. LaRouche would quickly veer right into Fascism, and then into a lunacy of conspiracy theories involving the Rockefellers, London bankers, the queen of England, the ADL, the KGB, and the Heritage Foundation. Then there is the Provisional Communist Party, or CPUSA (Provisional Wing), a super-secret organization founded by Gino Perente with a cell structure and even a "Military Fraction" that made the news for hoarding a stockpile of weapons in its Brooklyn headquarters. Its clandestine operations have eased only slightly with the ascendancy of Margaret Ribar to chairmanship, because the Provisional Communist Party operates primarily through front organizations—like the Physicians Organizing Committee, California Homemakers Association and the National Labor Federation—which never acknowledge the existence, let alone the leadership of the CPUSA (Provisional Wing).

Finally, we come to the Revolutionary Communist Party. A Maoist relic of the battles both ideological and physical of the 1970s New Communist Movement, the RCP is proud of its

personality cult around heir apparent to Mao and self-exiled chairman Bob Avakian, but not so open about its violent anti-homosexual history. Until 1988, the RCP defined homosexuality as counterrevolutionary, *bourgeois* and a product of capitalist decadence, after which date being gay was simply considered oppressive to women and narcissistic. Homosexuality was regarded by the RCP as acceptable only after 2001/02. Boastful of its participation in the 1992 LA Rodney King riots, the RCP runs the minuscule Revolution Books chain and wields control behind a series of front groups, from the now defunct punk-oriented No Business As Usual to Refuse and Resist, the October 22 Coalition to Stop Police Brutality, Repression, and the Criminalization of a Generation, La Résistencia, Not in Our Name, and the World Can't Wait. Its youth wing, the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade, is no more, replaced by youth-oriented Revolution Clubs.

Prior to 1975 and the RCP's founding, when it was known as the Bay Area Revolutionary Union headquartered in Berkeley, these folks would beat down local Trotskyists with their steel-toed boots while loudly denouncing their victims as degenerates and fascists. With their youth auxiliary of the day, the Revolutionary Student Brigade, the RU initiated a campaign beginning in 1971 to take over several targeted mass organizations on the Left, the most notable being one I was involved in, the Vietnam Veterans Against the War/Winter Soldiers Organization (VVAW/WSO). The RU first initiated a joint study group with the National Office of the VVAW/WSO and then infiltrated RU/RSB cadre into the steering committee and VVAW/WSO chapters. VVAW/WSO had a healthy mix of liberals, socialists, Marxists, Leninists and anarchists at the time. My chapter in Santa Cruz actually had a preponderance of anarchists by the time of the organization's annual convention in 1975. At the general plenary meeting, RU/RSB delegates denounced their opponents as "Trotskyite fascist scum" and "cocksucking faggot scum," initiated fistfights before, during and after the convention, and took over the organization by force and rigged election. The RU declared itself the Revolutionary Communist Party in September of 1975 with the endorsement of the decimated remnants of the VVAW, along with other supporting organizations such as the RSB, Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee, National United Workers Organization and Wei Min She. VVAW eventually legally won back its name and organization, and the RCP formed VVAW/Anti-Imperialist.

These efforts to form a so-called mass-based revolutionary vanguard party, far from producing the desired effect, actually brought about a narrowing of the RU/RCP's base and membership. A sizable minority faction calling itself the Revolutionary Workers Headquarters split off in opposition to the RCP's support for the Gang of Four in China by 1977. After years of aging and attrition within the RCP, and despite its recommitment to militant activism, another more informal split occurred in 2008 critical of Bob Avakian's overt cult of personality. A thinning of its ranks no doubt was interpreted as a "purification" of the RCP's ideology, even as it marked a waning of this Maoist organization's influence.

Such cultish behavior aside, the Left has always suffered from infighting and sectarianism, beginning with the battle between Marx and Bakunin over the First International Workingman's Association and reaching a peak during the Spanish 1936-39 civil war. Liberals, socialists, Communists and anarchists allied together under the Spanish Republican government, only to suffer from mutual mistrust and recrimination, backstabbing and civil war within the civil war, all of which resulted in Franco's defeat of the Republic. Marxism-Leninism under Stalin denounced Trotskyist Marxism-Leninism as "social fascism," the Soviet Union repudiated Tito's version of Communism in Yugoslavia, and Mao's version of Marxism-Leninism excoriated the Soviet Union as revisionist and "social imperialist" while the Soviet Union accused Mao of being "a nationalist, an adventurist, and a deviationist." Trotskyists are known to split at the drop of a hat, attacking each other more vociferously then they do other, non-Trotskyist Leninists, whose regimes they charitably call "deformed workers states."

The Situationist International in western Europe from 1957 to 1972 was known for many things, most notoriously their ultra-sectarianism. The SI split and split again, its members having broken with each other repeatedly until only two individuals remained in the SI by 1972. This divisive practice reached its absurd extreme in the "chain break," in which Situationists denounced anyone who didn't join them in denouncing their enemies. Thus they inverted Mao's famous axiom into: "To be my friend, you must be an enemy of my enemy."

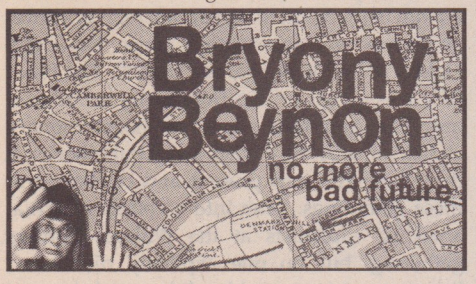
This tendency to hate the people you're closest to, that you share the most similarities with, is frequently the rule. Witness a history of world religions where the term sectarian originated. A much less prominent tendency is to unite divergent groups under a wider front alliance, if not a "big tent" organization. The Marxist-Leninist left has witnessed attempts at socialist regroupment (as when various Trotskyist groups such as Solidarity, Fourth Internationalist Tendency and Activists for Independent Socialist Politics fused, but then failed at broader unity attempts) or left refoundation (as when the post-Maoist Freedom Road Socialist Organization negotiated with and subsumed Fire By Night Organizing Committee, a split from the defunct Love and Rage Anarchist Federation). Left communists and anarchists cross-pollinated and contended by turns, ever since the POUM and the CNT/FAI joined forces for the 1937 Barcelona May Days uprising. Most recently, small circles of neo-Leninists, para-anarchists and post left communists are discussing and debating how to move past the wreckage that the Left has become by 1990.

In the late 1980s/early 1990s a number of continental anarchist gatherings were held around North America (Chicago 1986, Minneapolis 1987, Toronto 1988). I attended the Without Borders gathering in 1989 in San Francisco, where the whole panoply of anarchist groups, tendencies, currents and schools convened. The attitude here was not simply "can't we all just get along," but a quite aggressive, all-inclusive, catch-all, free-wheeling invocation. In addition to the classic anarchism of European origin (collectivism, mutualism, communism, syndicalism, individualism), there was green, primitivist, nihilist, pacifist, feminist, queer, and post-left anarchism, even Hakim Bey's blend of mysticism, man-boy love, and temporary autonomous zones. Especially Hakim Bey's loopy anarchy in 1989. The Black Bloc was a year or two from being introduced onto the American scene, so insurrectionary anarchism was still a ways away, but otherwise, the whole zoo was present and celebrated at these gatherings. I ran into a couple of actual anarchist capitalists at the Without Borders gathering, but no one explicitly distributed literature, put up a table, did a workshop, or presented a speaker advocating capitalism. Nothing was forbidden and all was permitted in this modern American anarchist milieu, except for explicit endorsement of capitalism.

Twenty-five years later, the anarchist milieu is much the same, if the Annual San Francisco Anarchist Book Fair is any indication. Anarchist capitalism still isn't welcome. Despite the entrepreneurial nature of the event, free market anarchists have no license to set up shop there. And when members of the Bay Area National Anarchists showed up in 2009, they kept a low profile, for fear of being attacked. National anarchist groups have been openly refused access by anarchist bookfairs in other cities, and national anarchism has been roundly castigated by much of anarchism as crypto-fascist. In 2007, the one-day Saturday SF bookfair expanded to an entire weekend, and was promptly criticized for not being flexible in accommodating the concurrent 8-day BASTARD conference in East Bay. Push came to shove, and the BASTARD folks started sponsoring their own book fair in the Berkeley/Oakland area. There are two anarchist book fairs in the San Francisco Bay Area every year, camaraderie be damned. The reason that in 2014 the SF Anarchist Book Fair and the East Bay BASTARD conference were reduced to a day each and no longer overlapped had little to do with rapprochement so much as it did with their respective lack of time, energy and resources to carry out fuller agendas. To make my point, a series of confrontations between leftist, identity/decolonize anarchists and post-left anarchists occurred between the end of 2013 and April, 2014. These incidents culminated when members of the Qilombo Social Center surrounded, harassed and ultimately drove out members of *Anarchy: a Journal of Desire Armed* from the March 22, 2014

SF Bay Area Anarchist Bookfair. The purge of post-left AJODA members by decolonize QSC members was an internet controversy for a bit longer than its allotted 15-minutes-of-shame. No doubt, the split in anarchist ranks that this idiocy highlights is forever.

Thus, we can see why one divides into two. **PERSONAL PROPAGANDA...** To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I'm archiving past columns, and publishing current ones a month delayed on my blog, www.leftyhooligan.wordpress.com. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@me.com.



Squaring out the Freaks: On Ravioli Me Away // No Form

The terms "weird" and "freak/y" mean less and less these days, and London trio Ravioli Me Away could teach any number of creepy crawlin' spikey punks a few things about pushing envelopes, or taking said envelopes and turning them into mental costumes. The phrase "art-punk" also has massively reduced currency, in the years since it transported as a reference from hardcore with more than two chords, to punk with snugly-fitting jeans, to I don't know where, but punk music made by artists looking to do more or less or something other than cement their own punkness is a rare breed today, too. Nowhere is this more obvious than in RMA's visual appearance, a struttingly uncanny triangle of highly specific costumes, sublime genderfucking through para-squat bricolage, future feminism, liberation through body paint.

The first thing that Ravioli Me Away's new LP—titled, of course, *The Inevitable LP*—does is asks you quite openly, and with good reason, if you're up to the job. "Good Team Player" could follow "Recruitment Consultant" (by erstwhile British post-punkers Hygiene) on a dream mixtape about the quiet tyrannies of the labor market, with its insistent shrieks of job interview questions. Most of the songs take a narrative structure and twist it around, reading like strange stories that career wildly from drunken practice room rants to direct challenge; conversations overheard on the street that stick in your head ("I wanna be a feminist / I don't know what it means") it's always and never impossible (not) to tell. Using whatever's around to make punk songs. The cascading vocals and bordering on midi-melodies are eerie as fuck. Like a found-object nightmare collage where you're certain there might be a severed human foot in there somewhere, albeit one probably covered in glitter.

Ravioli Me Away is a ridiculous name that goads you into immediately wondering where it came from, and the band itself ask the same of the listener. The songs on this record carry that rare ability of letting you view each increasingly mundane subject through the same cracked lens, a broken kaleidoscope that's psychotropical but still knows exactly what it's looking at. "Cat Call," arguably the RMA "hit," with accompanying terrifying/incredible video (check that out, as it explains what I am grappling with here better than any number of words) is anchored with the haunting refrain of "Why why why why why/do you cat call when a woman walks by" easily holding as much rage as that other song you might know that starts with multiple whys. "Romantic Amnesia" approaches Kate Bush-levels of shouldn't-work-out-does-really-really-does melodic clamour, with perfectly perverse lyrics—"Do you remember the time we booked an AirB&B?" could be one of the most plaintively epoch-defining first lines of any song this decade—love in the time of who-the-fuck-knows-what?

Vying for space against drums, bass, and keys, RMA command each line with intensely layered but very much front and centre (not much in the way of effects or masking) vocal interplay that's—I promise this time—more Slits-y/Delta 5-ian than any other band out there. Insistent, repetitive, this record is elevated into the sublime by a sneakily conservative fact that's also unavoidable. Sian's vocals are crystalline, her range insane, but its determinedly anti-operatic, just reaching and swooping with intent around every perfectly annunciated vowel, and layered up with Rosie's nasal intonations and Alice's huskier (très Modettes) voice, it makes a perfect headache-y earworm soup.

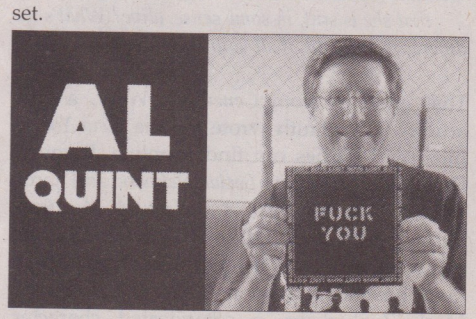
That album was written and recorded in between Good Job and Powerlunches, two of London's cubbyholes of musical freedom, flashes of small hope in a city whose musical landscape is dominated now by hopeless careering bullshit, barriers to entry, screamingly homogenous brand-fuelled "showcases" and other nodules of grim, flat, forgettable crap.

Good Job is a large, mostly corrugated iron ex-health centre in a working class area of London decimated by an aggressive, council-backed scheme of laughably inappropriate private rental units. It has been empty for some years and is due to become, inevitably, a block of luxury flats, so since it's been declared due for demolition, the space has been given over to "artists studios" for its final few months. This nice little arrangement is orchestrated by one of those arts organisations run by radicals, and the building's pre-rubble paroxysms are all overseen for them by Rosie, RMA's bassist. In reality this means a lot of precariously employed humans living in spaces they aren't strictly meant to, but really who's checking in on these abandoned rat runs, repurposed corridors, half-realised ideas, space to make, space to play, abandoned sculptures, paddling pools, wood, band practices after band practices? The building shares a courtyard with a towering set of mostly empty luxury flats already built, prefiguring what's to come across the way. The final death date being pushed further and further back, we lug a backline across the yard while a concierge at a desk staves off sleep next to a water feature that cascades down the side of the building, some bizarre design feature that nobody asked for. It's almost too poetic.

Power Lunches is a small can-bar and basement venue across the river from Good Job, owned and run by Sian, RMA's vocalist and drummer. In the last two years, nearly every show in London has slowly migrated there, being low cost and low hassle and run and staffed by punks open to every permutation of DIY gig, electronic music night, performance, and more. No Form is a group from West Yorkshire that I caught in the Power Lunches basement last month. They had organized a tour of ten people, none of whom appear to be over the age of 21, making up four bands—Bad Manifest, a scrappy, catchy raw punk group; ZFE, a Siege-y stompy outfit; Jason and the Argosnaut, a thrashier offering; and No Form, a hardcore band but one filtered through some kind of underwater death machine, pickled and shot through with echoing trumpet noise, booming fractured delayed inhuman vocals. Together this group of people run a small label called Reagent Records and release tapes of their bands. Blame it on location or youth or something else but it seems this is a set of bands driven by enthusiasm rather than ego-feeding, and it stings how refreshing it is. While all the sets at the show were great, No Form made my stomach feel weird, and any physical response seems to be worth unpicking, so let's.

"I just went downstairs and they were all lying on the floor in silence..." I heard some accidental witness of an unknown pre-gig ritual muttering as they skulked back up the stairs from the basement. The gig space at Power Lunches is a rectangle with a low stage at one end, sound desk at the other, black walls, floor, ceiling, and a set of facing mirrored walls that drip with sweat and condensation. Three members of the band are stood near, on, around the stage, fiddling nervously. Quite out of nowhere a boy appears with a trumpet, at the other end of the room. He's wearing a raincoat and swishing the mic stand about listlessly. The effect of his positioning is to split the assembled crowd, modestly sized, into two lines of people, only one or two people deep, all facing each other, presented with their own distorted reflections in the wall mirrors beyond, requiring the audience to look back and forth across the room to take in the spectacle. It's uncomfortable, unclear if it's intentional, and sets the room on a suitable edge for the duration. Their noise starts like a rumble and seems to hit every surface in the room at once. To say that it's unsettling is an understatement. Bearing no hallmarks of the boisterous bluster attendant to most hardcore. It stays both, though, by virtue of individual elements: Spluttering, creaky guitar, trebly and fuzz-ridden, it pierces the room further in two. Songs come and go without anyone noticing, applause in moments of silence

would feel gauche. The vocals are less voice and more of a loose, textural layer breaking in and out of the music, like the incantations of a, guttural spleen-letting demon as heard from down a well. Frequently the music falls apart to let these noises take precedent, sometimes this sounds like a throat being cleared, suddenly trumpeted noises, not farty or squeaking, but bold, long clear notes that hover over the bass, will push through the static and elevate the gloomy pace to a different set of frequencies. Gone before you've become used to it. Glancing back at band members on stage, they're all deep into a matrimonial ritual with their own instrument, one that involves cradling, breaking, hunching and generally trying to break out of their own bodies, all whilst staring each other out for what seems like minutes at a stretch. It's not the kind of intra-band look that you sometimes catch when watching a group with a member who might not make that jump into a different part of the song, or who needs reminding that it's five times round the riff on this section, no, none of that mercenary raised-eyebrow-I'll-give-you-the-signal moments, just soul-level staring. It's almost certainly not intentional but it feels like we're two lines of peeping toms, avoiding eye contact with each other in the mirrors while these people communicate telepathically, or say nothing, just stare and destroy themselves a bit. The crowd is almost stock still while Callum still in his coat writhes like he's battling with a possessed spirit. Guitar is moving everywhere, drums sound like they're about to fall down the stairs, bass is pummelling intently. Normally the standard method of delivering it live is more about playing your part, letting the crowd interpret with the sound that comes out while everyone mechanically does their bit. I'll watch them again some weeks after this and feel this same uncanny suspense, the crowd are again pushed to the side, subject to some outer vision. This time there is bless water in a glass bowl, primed for an exorcism, and audience members are asked to write on Callum's coat with a chalk marker. In any case, No Form are either part of some terrifying youth cult I'm too old to know about, or have just written a set of really cool distorted punk songs delivered with enough power to make me need to construct some insane projected reasons for why I was sure I was going to shit myself for the last two minutes of their set.



A WIN FOR THE GOOD GUYS AND GALS

I briefly mentioned the saga at the New England supermarket chain Market Basket in my last column. To bring you up to date, it reached a happy conclusion and things are getting back to normal, more or less. The back story is a long-standing feud between various members of the Demoulas family who own the chain. Specifically, the intense acrimony between CEO Arthur T. Demoulas and his first cousin Arthur S. Demoulas, that's gone back decades. There was even a physical altercation between the two Arthurs during a court hearing in the early '90s. The upshot is that Artie T. (as he's affectionately known) was able to maintain control over the company even though he only owned 49.5%. That was until someone on the board switched sides and Arthur S. gained control. Artie T. was fired and the Arthur S. faction got a payout of $300 million—that's the side of the family not involved in the company's day-to-day operations.

Market Basket is quite an experience—it's like a trip into the past, to the type of supermarket I worked at when I was a teenager. That wasn't much fun, to be honest. I was paid $2.40 an hour, barely above minimum wage. Shagging carriages really sucked, especially in the winter when they'd freeze to the parking lot. And I had to wear a fucking shirt and tie, even though I was basically doing grunt work. Incidentally, I lost that job thirteen months later when I accidentally broke a woman's eggs and she ratted me out. Before that, I lost control of a line of carriages and they gently touched a woman's derriere. I was almost let go then but given another chance. The egg incident was the last straw for store management and I got canned. Denise, the personnel manager, also claimed I didn't smile enough at the customers, didn't look them in the eye often enough and say "thank you." This was the first of many jobs where I'd have problems because of my "attitude." Of course, that surly attitude fit in better when I worked in record stores, where it's part of the "charm," I suppose.

Back to Market Basket—all male workers wear white shirts and ties and there's a color code for the workers' (or associates, as they're called) apparel. For instance, baggers wear aprons, grocery stockers wear blue smocks, produce workers where green ones (of course), management level associates have red smocks and the manager (or "store director") has a snazzy maroon sports jacket. It seems like such a regimented, hierarchical environment and I still probably wouldn't last very long but I've seen many of the same faces there for years. The associates' name badges show how long they've worked for the company. Last I looked, one of the assistant managers (I think—he has a red smock), Bob, had been with them for 47 years. Dave (or Mr. Webber, as it says on his badge), the director, has been there for 27.

There's nothing fancy about the stores and it's often a challenge navigating through the narrow aisles made narrower by pallets of groceries being put on shelves, kids hanging off carriages, or older customers moving along at a slower pace. The parking lot is a challenge to get in and out of, as well. But the prices are often quite a bit lower for most items (example—my favorite ice cream, Edy's, is $2.99 at the Basket, as I call it, and $5.99 at Shaw's on the other side of the shopping plaza). They've also had a promotion this year where they cut another 4% off your order for just about all items. That's what keeps people going back—that and the generally helpful and friendly environment of the place.

When Artie T. was ousted in that hostile takeover, the associates revolted and many walked off the job, demanding his return. But it wasn't just the associates—customers started boycotting the stores in droves and the chain's sales fell by about 90%—hemorrhaging millions of dollars per week. The parking lot was practically empty every time I drove by. There were few deliveries, and empty shelves throughout the stores, especially produce and meat. Vendors who supplied the stores took a big hit, as well—local farmers, for instance. Market Basket customers who honored the boycott showed up and pinned their receipts from other stores on the bulletin board by the entrance. It was national and international news. The sentiment was almost unanimously in favor of Artie T. and the associates.

From all accounts, Artie T. is a stand-up guy. Starting rate for full-time associates was $12 per hour and long-timers were rewarded with profit sharing and bonuses. He had a hands-on personal touch, showing care and concern for associates going through rough times. When the company lost $46 million in poor investments of the profit-sharing fund, Artie T. petitioned that the company replace the money so the associates would still get their profit share. This obviously didn't play well with the Arthur S. faction. That's despite the fact that the 71-store chain is a highly profitable, multi-billion dollar business.

After weeks of negotiations, things were resolved when Artie T. bought out Arthur S. There's a transition period as of now and, while Artie T. is back, the two CEOs hired by the Arthur S. contingent remain on board—Jim Gooch is a failed executive at RadioShack, having been selected as one of the worst CEOs of the year in 2012 by Wealth Wire. The other, Felicia Thornton, was a chief financial officer at the Albertsons grocery chain in the early to mid '00s and helped facilitate a merger with another company and a private equity firm and pocketed a cool $17.2 million for a "golden parachute," according to the United Food and Commercial Workers website. Not exactly the kind of executives that would instill confidence in the associates on the floor, in the warehouses, or on the trucks. Incidentally, Albertsons and the same equity firm just bought out the Safeway chain for $9.2 billion.

It's a fascinating story—instead of fighting for wages and benefits, the workers were sticking up for their boss and refusing to work for anyone else. There was obviously fear that the new regime wouldn't follow Artie T.' s lead and would have eliminated some of those perks, as well as raise prices, to benefit the shareholders at the expense of workers and

customers. Perhaps they would have merged with another company and cost many of those associates their jobs. Since Market Basket isn't unionized, these associates were taking a great risk. Eight supervisors did get fired by the new regime shortly into the revolt and, in some cases, part-timers' hours were cut to zero.

The loyalty for Artie T. is remarkable. There were Obama-like posters of Artie T. with the caption "I Believe." They're still up near the entrance and throughout the store I shop at. I even saw a sign on someone's door when walking by the beach. It almost took on a cult-like aura—the news broadcasts kept showing the same clip of Artie T. riding in a car through a phalanx of associates and reaching out to shake people's hands. This is particularly interesting given the fact that Artie T. is a billionaire and one of the wealthiest people in Massachusetts—he wasn't going to suffer any sort of financial burden, unlike the associates.

The union issue—some customers who supported the workers and the boycott said this was a perfect example of why we didn't need unions. On the contrary—it shows why they're a necessity. Such benevolence from a CEO or upper-level management is a rare thing. Other companies, such as Wal-Mart, pay such crappy wages that some workers have to apply for food stamps.

All I know is I'm glad they're up and running again and it was a victory for the associates. I've always shopped at a few stores but buy most of my food at the Basket. I was able to find some decent prices at the other stores (and do buy sale items there) but my grocery bill probably went up 15-20% each week. I'm only buying for two of us but those with larger families, who spend a few hundred dollars a week, probably took a fair financial hit. I was never happier to walk through that door, even though it was a day after the action ended and stock for some items remained sparse. I even told Bob I was happy they were back and he said he was happy I was back as a customer. I thought about giving him a high five but figured my verbal appreciation was enough.

I think it'll be a while before I start singing VENOM's "Welcome to Hell" while walking through the store or waiting in line. "Welcome Back" (the theme from the '70s sitcom *Welcome Back, Kotter*) by JOHN SEBASTIAN seems more appropriate...

MUSIC I DOUBT YOU'LL HEAR OVER THE P.A. AT MARKET BASKET...

A somewhat truncated review section this month, so let's get to it... The title of GOOD THROB's debut album—*Fuck Off*—should give you a pretty good idea where they're coming from. Jarring post-punk with throbbin' (yep) bass, jagged guitar, a pounding backbeat, and caustic vocals and lyrics. Bands like KLEENEX, DELTA 5 and the early '90s Riot Grrrl scene are easy touch points but they're accurate. In-your-face sentiments dealing with the day-to-day harassment and abuse that women deal with. Spot-on musically and lyrically and Ellie's voice sounds positively scathing. Incidentally, one of my favorite tracks by them, a cover of PUKE SPIT AND GUTS' "You Ain't Never" isn't on here but on the *Welcome to 2013* comp. I love the way Ellie matter-of-factly sings "you ain't never gonna fuck me in my ass" on that song. I've been kicking myself for missing them when they came through here earlier this year and hope I might have another chance to see them. (SuperFi, www.superfirecords.co.uk; White Denim, www.whitedenim.com; Sabermetric, sabermetric.tictail.com)

The Warthog Speak label has a pair of smokin' (relatively) new 7"s from MISSIONARY and STERILIZED. MISSIONARY's *American Strike* dishes out mean'n'nasty hardcore. They had one of last year's best demos and they're an ass-kickin' live unit, as well. Reed has a harsh, in-your-face vocal cadence and the band's approach is no-nonsense old school US bootboy fodder. Matt from SOCIAL CIRCKLE and GREEN BERET plays guitar and the other guys have played in other past/present quality NYC punk bands. Rage you can feel and will make you want to start stomping the floor.

From the opening bass thunder, thumping drums and ominous guitar riffs of STERILIZED's *Zero Sum Game* EP, it's obvious a rough ride is ahead and that's what you get. Raw D-beat hardcore treading well-worn ground but they do it right. The last track, their theme song "Sterilized," is a mid-tempo crusher that makes the floor shake if you play it loudly enough—and that's the best way to listen, of course. There's another 7", *Chemical Dust*, on the Video Disease label that's well-worth checking out, as well. (warthogspeak.com)

NIHILIST CUNT are so fucking punk it hurts. Becca, the rough-voiced frontwoman, sounds like she wants to hurt a lot of people and states as much on "Killing Spree"—well, certain people, like ones who have kids they're unable to support. There's the whole "you had a kid and stay home and I'm supporting you with my tax dollars" attitude that almost sounds like "Public Assistance" by AGNOSTIC FRONT. Although, after spending afternoons at the YMCA pool and dodging annoying kids, I can kind of see their point. And, despite all the anger'n'rage they muster, the music isn't bombastic but mainly fast and catchy in spots, while maintaining plenty of burn. (Suburban White Trash, PO Box 270594, Fort Collins, CO 80527, swt4records.storenvy.com)

Finally, there's a pair of new records on Peterwalkee Records. Longtime Finnish band HERO DISHONEST never disappoint and that's the case with their latest five song 7" EP *Kaikki Hajoaa*. And there's another foreign-language cover version—on the last album, it was DIE KREUZEN's "This Hope." This time they take on the PROLETARIAT's "Religion is the Opium of the Masses," retitled "Jumalan Selatys" (which actually translates to "God's Annihilation"—thank you Google Translate) and substituting the jazzy break of the original for something spacier-sounding. A bumpy ride navigating through hammering, thrashy terrain to the ferociously rockin' title track, Despite the title translation of "All Decomposed," there's no decomposition in their sound. As for the world at large...

RESIST CONTROL have been around since the late '00s (I saw them with HJERTESTOP back in 2008) but *Cessation* is their first 12" vinyl offering. Rippin' hardcore with some ultra-fast drumming as well as shifts in tempo, such as for the slightly more anthemic (for want of a better word) "Reality Check." You can hear bits of DRI, OFFENDERS (the vocals are somewhat like JJ's from that band), and SIEGE. Sometimes, it does come across as speed-for-speed's-sake but the band sounds tight and powerful throughout, before the slower, four-minute plus instrumental "Dissipation" that wraps things up. Lyrics that observe the often-dispiriting nature of our existence, both personally and politically. I like the Ayn Rand reference in "Traditions," which takes issue with the so-called American dream. Pretty solid release and the screened cover on heavy stock looks great. Co-released with Feral Kid Records. (www.peteralkeerecords.com; feralkidrecords.com)

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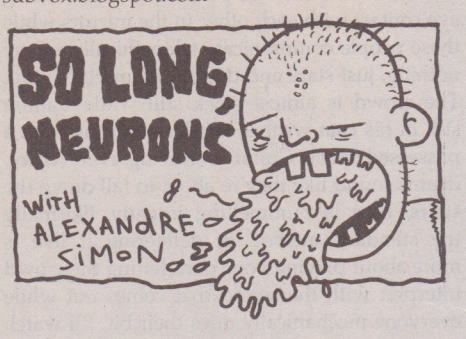


"(…) when a teenager is murdered, at least in Britain, her Facebook wall will often fill with messages that seem to not quite comprehend the gravity of what has occurred. You know the type of thing: Sorry babes! Missin' you!!! Hopin' u iz with the Angles. I remember the jokes we used to have LOL! PEACE XXXXX. *When I read something like that, I have a little argument with myself: "It's only poor education. They feel the same way as anyone would, they just don't have the language to express it." But another part of me has a darker, more frightening thought. Do they genuinely believe, because the girl's wall is still up, that she is still, in some sense, alive? What's the difference, after all, if all your contact was virtual?"*

That quote is from *Generation Why?*, a 2010 article Zadie Smith wrote for the *New Yorker*. Interested parties can find it online. It covers David Fincher's *The Social Network* and Jaron Lanier's *You Are Not A Gadget: A Manifesto*, but as a person who didn't/doesn't really care about either, it was a great read regardless. It questions the motivations of (Facebook creator) Mark Zuckerberg, a complicated character, whose aims in life include "eliminating desire" (?) but not the most traditional reasons people tend to go berserk for, like, say, lust or money.

Another memorable quote: *"Or maybe the*

whole Internet will simply become like Facebook: falsely jolly, fake-friendly, self-promoting, slickly disingenuous."

It seems that in the four years since the article what Smith feared has happened, not in every corner of the internet of course, but close enough. Since this is *Maximum Rocknroll* and not my personal diary, I'll say that the reason I'm writing about this is that I'm rather puzzled by the way everybody's constantly promoting themselves these days, and I'm more and more drawn to the ways of bands like, say, Sex Vid, or writers like Thomas Pynchon, who seem to make a point of not forcing themselves down our throats. Thinking like this is partly why I'm reluctant to put out another fanzine, why I'm reluctant to write about things happening right now, reluctant to write about bands I'm into right now, etc., as it sometimes feels like helping a band or individual "getting noticed" is becoming more and more like a disservice, in a way—in a lot of cases, I'm attracted to the losers, the outsiders, and I usually find the ways people start to act once they do get "noticed" repulsive, or at least disappointing.

Nowadays, on one hand there are all those bands and labels (the vast majority, it seems) using all the tools of "internet marketing" (Facebook and Tumblr and Twitter and a website, and not just one, but all of those at the same time), like this very publication does, constantly reminding us of their existence with pictures, reviews of their products, "blasts from the past," funny GIFs and whatnot, as if they were scared that, if the "consumers" (a word I hate using, but which seems the only one appropriate here) were to forget about them for one day, they would instantly cease to exist/become irrelevant. That position reeks of insecurity, of course, and seems to have become the norm. On the other hand, there are bands (brands?) that don't really promote themselves, or only in minor ways, and instead spend their time working on their craft. It feels great to know that a punk band like Hank Wood and the Hammerheads, for instance, can move 5,000 copies of an album released by Toxic State, a label with a relatively "low-profile" on the internet, or that a band like Total Control can become the beast it has become, with heavy rotation on Australian radios and big "indie" type labels chasing them while staying on non-corporate, DIY, grassroots level type labels like Iron Lung or La Vida Es Un Mus. "A big piss off to the musick biz!" indeed (thanks, Honeybane).

In the past year I've shut down accounts on most of the websites/net services I was using, and it feels great, but the web is the kinda beast that doesn't let you forget about it easily. As a person who hasn't owned a TV set for the past fifteen years, I'm starting to think I should do the same with the internet, this giant commercial for everything from Fox movies to underground fanzines...It feels like "disconnecting" oneself from the net has become some sort of equivalent to getting away from the world, like leaving home to go spend six months in a cabin in Siberia or something… There's a French writer, Sylvain Tesson, who wrote a book about that exact experience two or three years ago—the cabin in Siberia, not the internet thing. It was translated to English under the name *Consolations of the Forest* and I think you should read it if you're interested in the notion that there's too much of everything right now, and that this constant flux of pseudo-information makes it hard for one to know who one really is. In the book, Tesson spends his time reading, hunting, hanging with his dog, etc., and while it's different to live in this kind of poverty when one choses it, there are definitely moments to remember, even for a guy like me who hates the movie *Into the Wild* with a passion.

Anyway…This rant's what it is—unfinished, undecided, with not much of a point, and for some reason writing about the internet, especially in the context of "punk," always feels sort of a waste of time…At first I was gonna write about punk bands… About the fact that the old fucks from the reformed Discharge finally kicked out Rat (their singer for the past few years), which feels great to me for some obvious reason… About the recent Tercer Mundo LP, which disappointed me, as I was expecting these fuckers to keep the "unique" factor higher—to me their 7" was a masterpiece of modern hardcore because it was one of a kind, while the album sounds like what one would expect from some random modern Spanish punk band, a bit too generic and non-memorable because it's too close in sound and ideas to their contemporaries. I mean, of course the record sounds "great" and the tunes are "catchy," but I don't want great and catchy, I want something that doesn't sound like something else…It's weird to think that the current "Mexican new wave of punk" started out a few years back with records like the first Ratas Del Vaticano album on Siltbreeze, the XYX single on SS, and the Inservibles demo, all unique, fried, fucked, desperate and, let me say it again, *unique* recordings. And now with the recent Cremalleras and Tercer Mundo LPs I can't help feeling that these bands have more or less "adjusted to the norms of international punk," which is a terrible thing to say, a worse thing even to do, but hey, that's how worldwide HC punk functions now. Globalized sounds, globalized trends, globalized clones…The Freeze said it better, 30 or so years ago—*"If you dance the same and dress the same, it won't be long 'til you're the same. You look the same and act the same, there's nothing new and you're to blame"*… Anyway…Maybe I'm just a jaded dinosaur, or maybe my hopes for this record were too high…In comparison, Mujercitos is another band from the same city/same "crew" (I think?) that recently came out of nowhere with a demo I can get behind, mostly because the songs and sound both feel a bit more their own. They have a Bandcamp, you should check them out if you're into music, especially if said music is fast hardcore with a recording that's primal enough, where it doesn't always feel like you've heard the riff progression a million times before…Okay, one last record, and you can go read what Bryony and Mister Havoc have to say…Have you heard the Real Regular LP on Saucepan Records? It took me by surprise as, for once, it sounds exactly like what their label says, something like "A Flipper/Brainbombs cocktail bought to you by Dave E.," which is especially true on the first song, which had me scratching my head, dreaming for a minute that maybe these guys *had* found good old Dave and convinced him to front their band… Glad they didn't. Stay in your cave, Dave! We love you for not taking part. Anyway, to sum up this lackluster column, I won't review the new Hank Wood LP, which is a great mix of country and melodic punk, I'll just say yes to Thomas Pynchon, yes to Mujercitos, yes to Roberto Bolaño, yes to Saucepan records and Dave E. McManus, and no to all the rest, except maybe the Freeze. Why? Because *Broken Bones*, of course.

As the first three chords from Elena's car's stereo system almost blast out the windows, she and I yell "Woohoo" in unison. When the lyrics start, we sing along up to the chorus where we scream, "I don't care about you, fuck you!"

I ask her and her Riot Grrrl attitude how she knows such a punk rock classic so well. She tells me she loves Fear and I'm surprised. Most chicks didn't like Fear when they were playing around. But then again, Elena isn't most chicks.

So I turn down the stereo and open my mouth and that's when Elena says "Uh oh".

She knows I'm about to tell her a story about "back in the day". One she's probably heard a zillion times, but is polite enough to listen to again. And that's just one of the zillions of reasons I love her so....

***

So Evan, my bass player of Furious George and best friend, calls me for the umpteenth time that day and says, "George, it's Evan, if you're there, pick up the phone. George? George? It's Evan, if you're there, pick up the phone. It's Evan. Okay, um, my stomach kinda hurts, I think it was the Snickers, or maybe the McDonalds I had. Oy, it hurts. Little diarrhea, not much. Oh well, um, anyway, it's Evan, and..." At this point I have had enough, so I pick up the phone.

"Hi Evan," I tell him, "sorry to hear about your stomach." He tells me it's not so bad, and that he still wants to go hang out tonight. I ask him what's going on and tell him I didn't buy the Village Voice this week 'cause there wasn't a cartoon strip about me. He tells me to hang on and he'll go get it. I hear him stumble around

his apartment, and then he gets back on the phone and he's chewing on something.

"Whatcha eating?" I ask. He tells me about the two week old cupcakes that have been sitting around gathering dust and roaches.

I say, "Oh."

He starts to look through the Voice, "The Murder Junkies are playing this weekend," he tells me.

I tell him good, I like the Murder Junkies, but these days they sound more like Van Allin, and what the fuck is going on tonight.

"I think the Lunachicks are playing somewhere," he says.

I tell him I like my sex-change bands post-op.

He says, "Oh."

Then he tells me Fear are playing. Fucking Fear. The "land of the free, and the homos, too" Fear. The band that said it all when they sang, "I don't care about you, Fuck You," Fear.

So I ask Evan where they're gonna be at, and he tells me the Slimelight.

Yuuuch.

The Limelight is the worst club in New York. They search you, charge a zillion dollars for a drink, card like crazy, and have bouncers that beat the shit out of people.

I ask Evan how much it's gonna cost us to get in, and he tells me the ad says fifteen dollars.

D'oh.

I tell him to stay right there, not to go anywhere, and I'll call him right back.

He says he isn't going anywhere, that he thinks he may have diarrhea again, and maybe it was the pancakes and tea he had earlier from the Waverly Diner.

I hang up

I think.

Very hard.

About paying fifteen dollars to see Fear. I mean, they are Fear. Fucking Lee Ving. I want to go, badly.

But it is against my Jewishness, and what's more, my Punk Rockness, to pay fifteen dollars. So I figure I should call the Limelight and put myself on the list. Now the question is, who should I say I am?

I think.

Very hard.

About who I am so that I won't have to pay fifteen dollars to see Fear.

I wonder if I should say I'm George Tabb from Destroy Television?

They'd probably laugh and tell me Public Access shows suck. Then I think maybe I should tell them I'm from *Maximum Rocknroll*.

But then I think they may mistake me for Mykel Board when I get there and beat me up.

Hmmm.

Then I get an idea. I call the Limelight. Some woman answers the phone. I tell her I'm George Tabb, Vice President in charge of sales for DGC (Geffen) Records. I tell her that my secretary, bimbo that she is, forgot to list me for tonight, and for that, I will have to fire her. I then ask her to put me plus one on the list, because I think David (Geffen) would like to join me in scouting out Fear tonight. The woman tells me that that is no problem, and there will be a ticket waiting for me at the door. I tell her "Thank you," and then she asks if that secretary job is available right away.

I hang up

I call back Evan, and his phone rings at least six times before the answering machine picks up. I say, "Evan, it's me, George, if you're there, pick up. It's me, George, Evan? Okay, um..." and Evan picks up the phone.

He tells me he just had diarrhea, and it was dark. He thinks maybe he has ulcers, and that maybe his stomach is bleeding. Or maybe it was just the onion rings he had for lunch.

I tell Evan that we are on the list for Fear tonight, and ask him what time he wants to meet. He asks me how I got on the list, and I tell him it's an ancient Chinese secret.

He says "Ancient Chinese secret, huh?"

Then he says he'll swing by and pick me up around ten. I'm sure glad Evan has a car.

***

So we get to the Slimelight, and it is packed outside. All these Punk Rockers.

Some of whom I hadn't seen in years.

In fact, I saw these three women I used to see at Ramones shows about seventeen years earlier. They looked the same, except now they were older, heavier, and were now with their husbands. I looked at them and remembered the good old days.

I used to go to Ramones shows a lot, and used to love to stand up front and watch Johnny play. I would wonder how his wrist could move so quickly up and down, and when I would get home from those shows, I would try to move my wrist as quick. And sometimes I'd even try it while holding my guitar.....

Anyway, I'd always be up front, and then those three girls would always show up.

Three bitchy butch broads from Brooklyn.

These walking/talking PMS Machines would always push me out of the way and stand in front of Johnny. When I would try to get back up front, they'd punch me really hard and tell me to "Fuck off, little faggot".

Then they'd raise their fists in the air to Johnny, and I could see that they had enough underarm hair to braid or dreadlock the hairstyles of other famous New Yorkers like H.R. or Jesse Malin. I'd try to push my way up front a few more times, but I would always wind up getting pounced on or hit, and would go home black and blue.

Once I even got a black eye from one of them. I went home, and my mom asked me what happened. I told her that three big huge guys tried to beat me up, but I kicked their asses. Then my step-dad, Nick, asked, "The girls from Brooklyn, huh?"

I said, "Yeah."

So, there they were, fifteen years later, and now I was happy to see them.

Go figure.

So I walk up to them and their biker husbands and say, "Hey, remember me? I'm George. We used to see each other at Ramones shows. Wow, how time flies, huh? Wow, isn't this great?"

They all just look at me and say nothing. Then one of them punches me in the stomach real hard, and says to her two friends, "Who is this jerk? Let's go see Fear."

And that was that

Evan and I make our way to the doorman/woman/whatever and tell her we are on the guest list. It asks whose list we are on, and I say that I think probably the Limelight's. She finds our names and says to go inside. But next time, to know whose list we are on.

I tell her okay, and me and Evan stand on this long line that winds around a bunch of stairs before stopping at a ticket booth. We figure it is gonna be at least ten minutes.

Forty-five minutes later we make it to the ticket booth. We are both bitching that this is taking way to long, and begin to wonder if this is worth it just to see Fear.

Then we remember "I Love Livin' in the City," and figure it is. When we get to the ticket booth, the guy asks us for our tickets. I look at Evan, and then at the guy.

Uh-oh.

I tell the guy we are on the guest list. He says that is nice, but where are our tickets. I tell him the doorman/woman/whatever told us to just go inside. He says we need tickets.

At this point, some really big, ugly, asshole bouncer walks up to the ticket guy and asks what the problem is. The guy tells the bouncer that we are being difficult, that we don't have tickets, and that we are holding up the line.

The crowd, hearing this, shouts "Yeah, hurry up, you're holding up the line."

Wonderful.

I look back at all the people and see those three Punkazons from Brooklyn. They look as if they're gonna kick my ass.

So do their biker husbands.

Shit.

I explain to the bouncer that me, and my associate, are from Geffen Records, and we are on the guest list. He uses his walkie-talkie to contact the doorman/woman/whatever it is.

He blabs into the thing for a few seconds, listens, and then blabs some more. Finally he tells the ticket booth guy something and then walks away. I figure that's that, and start to walk in. The ticket guys says, "That'll be ten bucks, you were on Mistress Fusia's list." I ask what the fuck is that, and it was supposed to be free.

Then the bouncer walks up to me and Evan, and tells us he is going to beat us up if we don't each cough up ten dollars. I figure I better, I mean, maybe me and Evan could take this oversized gorilla, but I'm sure those three Brooklyn mutants would join in, and they'd kill us.

So, twenty dollars down the drain.

We walk into the club, and I immediately regret leaving the house. All these trendy little assholes are walking around with their tiny little backpacks and stupid 1970s midriff cut shirts.

Yuck.

Suddenly we see our pal, Ryan, a.k.a. "Skeleton Boy" and I think things might not be so bad. Ryan is this cool punk looking guy who lives around here, and besides having a plastic skeleton on his leather jacket, looks like one as well.

He is always wearing a striped shirt, or some other Ramone type shirt, and has spiky black hair. He tells Evan through his skeleton lisp that he is really excited about seeing Fear, and that he has never seen them before. He even buys a "Lee Ving Army" sticker. He tells me the price, fifteen dollars, was a bit steep, but it should be worth it, after all it's Fear, isn't it?

I begin to feel stupid about bitching about the price. I mean, I am gonna see Fear, one of the greatest Punk Rock bands of all time. What the hell is ten or fifteen dollars?

Fuck it.

I decide I am gonna have fun. I go to the bar and plop down five bucks for a one dollar beer. What the fuck. It's Fear.

I begin to feel okay until the bartender asks me for the other five.

Then we walk into a different lobby of the Limelight. Ryan gasps, Evan laughs, and I about faint. They have set the place up to be a piercing parlor, and all the kids are lined up to get holes stuck in them.

They have a price list up that reads: "Lips–$10, Ears–$10, Nose–$20, Tongue–$20, Nipples–$30, Clitoris or Penis–negotiable."

Huh? Like someone is gonna be at a club and decide to get a hole in their face or crotch?

Well, yeah. They do. I guess they get 'em while they're drunk. And what's this about "Clitoris or Penis–negotiable"?

What, it depends on the size?

I walk up to the piercing woman, the woman who is poking holes through a nice pair of breasts, and ask her what qualifies her to be doing this here, at this club.

She tells me she used to be a bartender, but this makes more money. Serving drinks, sticking a steel rod through cocks and cunts, I can see the similarities.

Right.

We finally hear a band taking the stage, and make our way to the main room.

It is Butt-Trumpet.

And they suck.

I mean, they really suck.

They got this guy who looks like Keanu Reeves singing, and they sound awful. Then the guy starts to bitch about his label, EMI, and the crowd loves it. I can see it for the Emperor's New Clothes that it is, as can Evan and Ryan. But it seems no one else can.

The guy starts to say how the label ripped them off, and how they didn't even show up to see them tonight.

If I were the label, I wouldn't either.

They suck.

Anyway, suddenly one of the girls in the band starts to sing. And suddenly the band isn't half bad.

In fact, I begin to like them. She is really punky and really funny. And she is wearing a torn up Mickey Mouse shirt and plaid skirt. Very cool. They play some more songs with her singing, and I think maybe, just maybe, they are okay. Then Keanu starts to sing again, so I dismiss that thought right out of my head and walk out into the lobby until they are through. I see a girl get a bolt stuck through her tongue.

Wow.

Someone should put a bolt through both of Keanu's lips, just to shut him the fuck up.

***

Finally it is time for Fear. All the kids with their little backpacks are packed up front, and Ryan says he is going up there to join them. He asks if Evan and I would like to as well. I tell him that we are gonna hang in the back, but to go have fun. He says, "Yeah, fucking Fear, alright", and with that, goes up front.

The lights dim and the band comes on stage. Wait a second, where is Split Stix, where is Philo Cramer, where is Derf and where is Lee Ving? What the fuck band is this?

Three young guys in military outfits, and a strange looking singer? I mean, geez. The singer, especially. This guy had long black hair and looked like a cross between Krusty The Clown and a satanic Mickey Mouse, what with that receding hairline and all.

Anyway, this lead singer guy is really strange looking, and then he counts, "1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4!" and I realize it is Lee Ving. Oh my god, what happened to him? He sure didn't look like that in Decline.

Wow.

So, the band kicks into the first song, and they are so-so.

I look at Evan, and he looks at me.

Fuck.

I figure, the ad said "Fear", and this wasn't Fear.

This was more like "Lee Ving's Army".

And they sucked.

Mr. Ving does song after song after song after song.

No funny jokes, no scary threats, no insults, no flying beer bottles, spit, or mooning the band.

Just great songs played very mediocrely.

What fun is Fear without the fear? And humor?

It's like seeing Don Rickles trying to sing.

Or sex with a really thick condom.

Finally he stops playing long enough to yell at the crowd. Well, not at the crowd exactly, at the bouncers.

He tells them there is some "Natty looking kid" up front who is spitting on him, and that they should kick his ass, then kick him out.

The bouncers do as they are ordered. Good little brownshirts.

Then Lee and band play some more. He stops a couple of more times to have members of the crowd beaten-up and thrown out by the bouncers.

Nice guy.

At this point I start to yell an updated line from *Decline of Western Civilization*. I start to yell, "Hey Lee, It's 1995, can't ya afford a fuckin' facelift?"

The crowd laughs.

Sort of.

But then Lee has some more people beaten up and thrown out. Finally, Evan and I walk into the lobby, disgusted.

We hear "I Don't Care About You, Fuck You" and realize the title could not be more appropriate.

***

After the show Evan and I walk outside where everyone is hanging out. We see Ryan, and ask him what he thought of the show. He tells us through his bony lisp that he was thrown out for spitting.

I say, "You were that natty looking kid?"

Ryan nods his head.

He then tells us that he wasn't spitting, but rather throwing money at Lee Ving, cause he thought Lee could use it to hire a new band.

I laugh.

Then another friend of mine, Tyler, walks up to me and tells me he got thrown out and beat up by the bouncers for laughing at the band.

I just nod my head.

Then this girl and her boyfriend walk up to me. The girl, seething, says that I think I'm cool cause I got thrown out, and punches me. Then she tells her boyfriend that I called her "a bitch-whore slut", and tells him to beat me up.

I look at her in amazement. I could never have come up with a more accurate description. Plus, I have never seen her before in my life.

Her boyfriend threatens to kick my ass, and Ryan and Evan come to my defense. I scream at her as to why she is making this up about me.

Finally she admits it is because she wanted to make her boyfriend jealous.

Wonderful.

Whatever.

Anyway, everyone around decides that they are going to stick around to kick Lee Ving's ass. I know the bouncers are never going to let that happen so I plan to stick around and see the Bugs Bunny type violence about to ensue.

We wait around for a long while, and it looks as if Lee has escaped through some other door besides the back one.

Just as well, I figure.

Ryan asks me and Evan what we are gonna do now, and wonders if we wanna go to the Pyramid with him to see a girl who can shoot flames out from between her legs by inserting an aerosol can in her puss. I him no, we saw that last week. But he should go and have fun anyway. He rubs his balding skull, says goodnight, and leaves.

As Evan and I make our way to his car he begins to tell me his stomach doesn't feel so good. He says he probably needs to eat, and asks me if I wanna go out for some pizza or something. As I begin to answer him I see the three Brooklyn girls and their biker husbands approaching us. I tell Evan that I'll go out and eat anything, just open the fucking car door.

Now.

Take my life, please.

ENDNOTES:

1. What a great year for new music from a couple of bands who basically started it all! First there was the new Meatmen album I wrote about last month, and now there's the Dwarves Invented Rock'n'Roll by who else but the Dwarves! This is the best album since The Dwarves Are Born Again. There are songs here about fucking, killing, doing drugs, more fucking, fucking dogs, fucking mothers, fucking girls in trailers, sluts, more sluts, and Blag's Penis. As usual the songs are catchy as hell, and the music is thick with beautiful production that rivals Phil Spector or Butch Vig. And the lyrics? Smartest, funniest stuff I've ever heard. If this was read as poetry the audience would be laying on the floor clutching their stomachs and rolling around. Or having an asthma or heart attack from the sheer brilliance. Amazing record!
2. The more world events that are unfolding, the more respect I have for Jello Biafra. Not that I ever didn't have respect for the guy. But he saw all this coming and did the Paul Revere thing by trying to warn everyone. And he's still in the trenches, fighting for what's right. And warning us of stuff that's still yet to come; Please listen to this guy, get Shock-U-Py on AT, and start making plans. Big changes are acomin'….
3. My bass player in Iron Prostate, and long time friend and writer for Rolling Stone and other magazines passed away last week. His name was Charles M. Young. Or Chuck. Google him. See the impact he made on the world and on Punk Rock. I'm really going to miss you forever, Chuck. It's hard saying good-bye to one of my best friends…..
4. @facebook.com/georgetabb

Dear readers, if the world seems a little darker now than it did a few weeks ago, it's because one of its brightest lights has been extinguished. My sweet Lucy passed on, just a month shy of her 17th birthday. It is, of course, impossible for me to eulogize an animal, goddamnit, a *person* who meant so much to me and my family, and all our friends (to be honest, she had a lot more friends than I'll ever have), but it's no exaggeration to say that I can credit her with almost everything that is good and happy in my life considering that my first date with my now wife was predicated on my request to come over some time and meet her dog. As our relationship bloomed, so did my relationship with Lucy, and for the last nine years she has been my constant companion. It's a staggering loss, one that we'll never completely recover from. If you've got an animal companion in your life, please hold them a little tighter and a little longer today, and know that you'll never have a better friend or one whose loss you mourn more deeply. Fuck. I miss my dog.

So that's the bad news. But the world keeps turning and if there's anything that distracts better than a good fucking punk record I haven't found it yet. Of everything I picked up this month, the ASEINATO DEL PODER demo matched my bleak mood the best. Gritty, raw D-beat in the same orbit as DHK, or INFIERNO DES COBARDES with moderate tempos and short memorable songs. The vocal is pleasantly not raw, coming more from the Spanish punk camp than the traditional D-beat roar, while the nastiness is supplied by the vicious guitar sound and relentless drumming. "Tortura y Crimenes de Guerra" is the hit of the demo for being just about as perfect as a D-beat song gets, though the creepy-crawling "Atrapado" makes a strong case as well, breaking the mold of the formula with a repetitive riff that'll worm its way into your head for days. I doubt any *MRR* reader really needs to hear again about how great the Spanish punk scene is these days but it's a sentiment that always bears repeating, and this demo is better than most coming from that corner of the world. (Infección Sónica, infeccionsonica@hotmail.com, Pablo F.R. C/Pablo Islesias 18-7B, 33402 Aviles (Asturias) Spain, or World Gone Mad in the US, worldgonemad.bigcartel.com)

I doubt the words "Bogota, Colombia" are frequently connected with the word "punk" in most *MRR* reader's minds, but Bogota's own SECTA SUICIDA is set to change that post-haste with a monster of a new EP. The label copy calls this classic Spanish punk à la LA UVI passed through a PELIGRO SOCIAL filter, and that couldn't be more accurate. That being said, I like this at least as much as the PELIGRO stuff, and it's hardly a simple imitation. This is 100% tough-as-fuck punk with a thick rock'n'roll backbone, laying in the hook and the boots with equal abandon. Every track has an epic sing-along feel, but they really shine on the minor-key bluesy "Vacio", a prefect song for punkers up to no good. Everything here, from the melodic backing vocals to the short sharp leads to the beautifully silk-screened sleeve is meticulously put together. Such an impressive release, I can't wait to hear more. Fortunately, this is also available in cassette format with extra live tunes that prove they're far more than a one-record wonder. The EP is limited to 135 copies outside Colombia and the tape to a scant 100, so you'll have to act quickly to get in on the action. (Rat Trap Records/Discos MMM, discosmmm.storenvy.com)

You want to feel fifteen again? Put on the DISCOCKS, a band that achieved perfection around 1993 and never changed ever again. Sure enough here, on their first release in five years, a three-way split with SMALLSPEAKER and the LAST SURVIVORS, Peter and Co. sound pretty much the same as always, kicking things off with a catchy bass line that launches into the couldn't-be-simpler (or catchier) punk/Oi! style that they perfected over two decades ago. The recording might be a little cleaner than it would have been in the '90s, but the guitarist still flubs at least one note on the two bar solo and the spirit is still unimpeachably punk. "Oi Oi Oi, What you gonna do?" Fuckin' pogo, that's what! On the flip, SMALLSPEAKER bring a pretty solid garage-y punk track with a cool mellow vocal that contrasts beautifully with the hot solo on the enigmatically named "Metal Six Wires". Finally, the LAST SURVIVORS (a band that either recently reformed or also hasn't put anything out in a really fucking long time) drop a frantic and way too short hardcore à la DISCHARGE/UK82 track that has me absolutely salivating for more new material. Their *Chaos is Here* EP on Crust War is an absolute lost gem, and while the other two EPs don't quite meet that standard, they're pretty fucking great as well. This new track, "Two Worlds" easily proves the band hasn't lost a step. Shit, I wish this was a CD comp with several more tracks for each band because I'm dying to hear more from every one of these groups. The packaging is very thin, with no insert or lyrics or anything, but you do get your choice of fancy vinyl configurations (I got the orange on one side, blue on the other one and it looks neat!). Three tracks, three keepers, you can't go wrong picking this one up. (Joe Pogo Records, PO Box 281, E. Syracuse NY, 13057, joepogorecords.com)

Finally I've got two major Greek reissues that I am in no way qualified to write about in a historical contex (hopefully, when the review copies come in more qualified reviewers can expand on that) but I can say they're both fucking great records. The first is a full LP of APOGNOSI (DESPERATION), joining nine studio tracks with a live set, all recorded in 1985. These cats were definitely into the UK scene by way of CHAOS UK, joining rapid-fire vocals and fast-as-they-can-go tempos to simple three-chord punk. The title track of the LP, "Two Minutes Before," even in translation, is a poignant anti-war lament and clearly deserving of a much wider release than an appearance on an obscure Swedish tape compilation. The last six tracks, due to studio limitations, were recorded with a really obvious drum machine, which is by turns hilarious and kind of effective. Certainly, it's a unique sound. Regardless of the goofy drum sound, these are good thrashy hardcore tracks, again with admirably militant political lyrics. The B-side is a very raw live recording, super heavy on the vocal, but definitely worth hearing. If nothing else it provides the opportunity to hear several of the later studio tracks with live drums as they were meant to be heard. The dirge-y bass-heavy take on "Drugs" is actually quite a bit better live than the studio take. (Scarecrow Records, scarecrow.gr, B-Other Side, b-otherside.gr, Stand Against Vivisection Productions, mellakka83@yahoo.com)

The other is an expanded reissue of the ADIEXODO/GENIA TOU HAOUS (DEAD

END/CHAOS GENERATION) split cassette, a release that I understand was very important to the Greek scene, with added live and demo material from both bands. CHAOS GENERATION were (again, as I understand it) the more important and impactful band of the two, but there's nothing lacking about the ADIEXODO material. They're a band that somehow held BLITZ and JOY DIVISION in equal esteem, switching from a tough aggro sound ("War") to depressive proto-goth plodders ("Without a Choice") with equal aplomb. "The Day With Two Suns", a bleak, plodding anti-war lament is easily the best song on the side, being maybe the best punk interpretation of space-y dub-meets-punk ever put on tape, especially with the dropped-in super fucking angry chorus. It's a galvanizing track, and one that makes the purchase price of the LP worth it alone. CHAOS GENERATION, wow. The '83 split recordings reveal a band already at the height of its power, dominated by charismatic, CONFILICT-esque vocals and featuring a broad musical palette that incorporates everything from slow burning post-punk ("The Death Rattle") to Crass Records militant marching punk ("War for Whom?") to stripped-down fast hardcore ("Church-Hypocrisy"). Based on reputation alone I was expecting to be impressed by this band, but holy shit…you have to hear this stuff. And by "you" I mean pretty much any punk, from the avant-garde goth revivalist to the back-to-basics hardcore fanatic. It is an absolute crime that this band isn't up there in the Euro hardcore pantheon with BGK, RAW POWER, and INFERNO. Goddamn, this is by turns unbearably dark, really catchy, and incredibly raw and driving. You have to hear this! (Scarecrow Records, B-Other Side)

So that's it for this month. Looking forward to the LIFELOCK demo next month and whatever else comes along. RIP Lucy, I will miss you every day until I too am gone. Take care everybody.

Look *Maximum*, this column is late as fuck this month and I am tired as heck so instead of a bunch of self-aggrandizing PC faux wisdom can we just talk about some fucking bands right now? It's been a minute and this is supposed to be a music magazine. I think.

I can't tell if Die! Die! Die! from New Zealand are famous or not. I mean, they tour all over the world in like Europe and Asia and stuff, and they just put out their fifth record, and Steve Albini produced their first full-length, apparently just because they called him up and asked and he said okay. (I don't think that having Steve Albini record your band is a selling point, really, because isn't he a misogynist who sucks in other ways too? Like the kind of guy who would name his band Rapeman? I only mention him because I think he mostly records bands that are, like, at least punk famous.) But also they just self-released their fifth album, and it doesn't seem like people in the US really know about them, and most of the time when I've found physical copies of their CDs they've been hella cheap.

But Die! Die! Die! rules.

I mean, I've probably talked about them in this space before. They started out playing loud and abrasive yelping and scraping post-punk stuff with song titles like "Franz (17 Die! Die! Die! Fans Can't Be Wrong)" and "Ashtray! Ashtray!" but they've evolved into this loud, dreamy post-punk thing with guitars that swirl instead of scrape and, like, vocal melodies? Sort of? It's like the music isn't trying to punch you out any more, too, now it's trying to push you over. Except also sometimes they are still punching you? I think the verses of the first song off the new record are in 11/4, which, if you know what that means, you will understand that that is fucking ridiculous.

Who does that?

Anyway, the whole record rules and it also rules to follow a band for a long time and see them get different and weird in a way that isn't boring. You know what I mean. Like, sometimes a band is around for a while and they learn about, like, melodies, and start to be more interested in "countermelodies" or harmonies with chord progressions and "changes" and "bridges" and they forget that the whole point of playing music in the first place was not to do, like, math, but to make you feel like you could punch a cop and get away with it. But Die! Die! Die! still keep their eye on that prize and so even though the new album—I should tell you that it is called *S W I M*—is kind of a miserable lonely rainy day record, it is also a loud screaming along and flipping out record. Just trust me.

Look, *Maximum*. I can't lie to you. I like my pornography softcore and my hardcore metallic, so it has been a surprise to me too that I've been bumping Night Witch's *Winter 2013 Demo* as much as I have. It's hardcore without very much metal. Maybe I am late to this party and maybe everybody else already knows about this band, or maybe nobody does and they've already broken up. I don't know because I live in the fucking woods in a little house full of spiders with my girlfriend who makes tinctures and pees in jars and we have a weird mutt, a thousand books by Starhawk and no friends to talk about bands with. It doesn't matter. I just want you to know about this band for a couple reasons.

First of all, this is Witch Rock. Or Witch Core. Remember when every girl on tumblr was stoked on stuff that was "witchy," including me? *That shit never ended.* It just got incorporated into our lives. Stuff that used to be "witchy" has just become "stuff." Hipster witch monstrous feminine occult tourism poseurs have moved on to vaporwave or whatever and the rest of us get to listen to Night Witch as we drink the blood of oppressors by the light of the harvest moon. I mean, I guess they are just a cool hardcore band with the best kind of feminist/anti-bro lyrics, good spooky quiet parts and a sample from that movie *Clueless*, and they've only recorded eight songs as far as I can tell. But all those things are awesome! Plus they have a twenty-five second rager about how dresses with pockets rule. This is relevant to my interests and maybe to yours?

I've never seen them live so I don't know what else to tell you about Night Witch but I think you can get their tape from Spirit Cat Tapes or a copy made of electrons from night witch FL dot bandcamp dot com.

Also if we're gonna talk about electrons there are cool pictures of cool punkers at prunellavulgaris.tumblr.com and the person who takes the pictures, Rosie, has a band called Dearth and so far Dearth only has two cell phone recordings up on their bandcamp page, dearth MTL dot bandcamp et cetera, but maybe by the time you are reading this there will be more? They're a not-all-dudes (not sure how everybody identifies) queer, bass, drums and yelling kind of band, and if you don't like that kind of band maybe you should skip to George Tabb. Groke is another band with that setup who rules. Their bandcamp is just their name.

If you live near Keene, New Hampshire and want to be in a band like that with me fuckin' hit me up! Mostly if you are a trans lady, but if you're not a trans lady then the closer you are to being a trans lady the more stoked I will be for our band. Especially if you can play blastbeats. For an hour.

Anyway the last band I want to tell you about is called Weak Wrists and they are from Asheville, NC. They have a demo on their bandcamp which also is named after their band and it is metallic and screamy and does black metal sometimes but just sounds like the fucking apocalypse and I can't find lyrics anywhere, which is cool because it's not the kind of music where you can understand the lyrics because music where you can understand the lyrics sucks. Their elevator pitch is "fast, loud and sad." I want to tell you more about this band but I don't know any more about them except that I have listened to their demo a million times.

That's it! Next month: more self-righteousness and google results for "emoviolence."

I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, so we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion *column though. (...and if we need a tagline for that I hope it can be something as vague as: "A column for people who are intrigued by the subtle difference between 'punks' and 'punx.'")*

Dear Mr. R,
What the fuck is up with Joe Queer? I know punk is complicated, and different people like and hate different things, but fuck the police.
—ACAB

I'm so glad this is an opinion column! It's already so embarrassing to know about this, and it's totally double embarrassing to care about anyone involved, but it is seriously super triple embarrassing to have read all of those internet back and forths where people tried to explain what punk is or is not and to have chosen sides in the whole thing, but here we are.

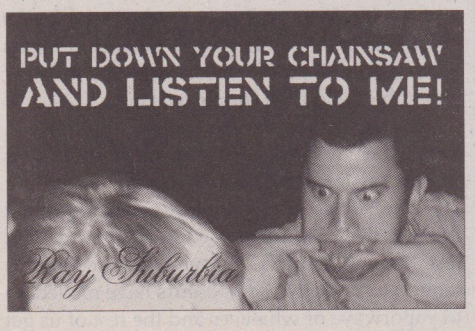
If you actually live in the real world and aren't tuned into the business of irrelevant old men, the short version of what happened is that Joe Queer made a public show of support for the cop who killed Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, which obviously shocked and angered the punks, which led to Ben Weasel utilizing an apparently boundless reserve of internet energy in order to troll the angered people and defend the right of Joe Queer to be a total cop kisser. Finally, when it seemed the punks had realized that "these men are unnecessarily horrible, and we could all just stop supporting their bands and listening to them talk," along came a group of those "you're all being too PC" guys with their "punk is supposed to piss people off" argument, along with a truly surprising amount of people who claimed that "GG Allin is rolling over in his grave" about this—as though the comfort of GG Allin would be anything to take into consideration. One out of five stars for that argument. I personally hope that GG Alin can't stop rolling over in his grave, that he can never find the cold spot on his pillow, and that his netflix is constantly buffering, because fuck that guy and his comfort.

Everybody is of course free to secretly listen to his country album all they want, but I don't believe any of that "punk is *supposed to* piss people off" stuff. Like, I get it in a The Nature of Your Oppression is the Aesthetic of Our Anger way, but that feels like us against the status quo. It's the reason punk felt strong and important to so many of us in the beginning, and these guys are totally the status quo. I mean, I might as well have had way less stupid hair and tried harder to get along with my dad if I knew punk was gonna be all unchecked violence and transphobia. In summation, yes, fuck the police. But it is, in all actuality, totally fine for Joe Queer to defend cops or anyone else he chooses, and if we don't like it, we can stay away from him and his bands and the labels who put out his records, and his place in punk can be as a member of some band fifteen-year-olds are embarrassed of as adults. Choices!

Dude. I got a new job where two of my friends already work and I'm their boss now. It's seemingly not awkward for anybody but I'm scared of a future situation where I'll either be accused of favoritism or feel forced to regulate them and they'll resent me. They could also abuse my inclination to, of course, prioritize them for things like raises and special treatment. I just want a right way to address all these concerns before anything happens so I can sleep at night.
—No Gods, No Bosses

Becoming the Man, a punk coming of age story. You know you can't really control how your friends are going to react to you as a boss, and people always act like giant weirdos when they're forced to deal with a change in power structure, but chances are that if they're the understanding type of friend, they'll be trying to be understanding in this case as well. And if they are normally the taking advantage types, then you can probably expect them to try to take advantage of you here, and so on. Depending on what they're like, you might be able to talk to them about your concerns beforehand in a non-work situation where things feel more balanced, but the only thing that's really gonna make a difference is how you treat them on a day to day basis at work. I mean, even if they weren't your friends, this would obviously still matter, but, especially with friends, you don't want to get yourself into a cycle of occasional cool boss, with periodic phases of over regulation to prove you're still the one in charge, or anything power struggle-ish like that. I'm pretty sure that's the main way resentment happens, and what will really make you look like you're abusing the perceived power. Just be consistent and respectful of all of your coworkers and things should be fine. Generally no one accuses anyone of favoritism when they feel as though they are also being treated justly. However, I once had a friend in a similar situation who was given the advice "Who cares, you're taking asshole pay now." Which is shitty but also true, totally an option, and maybe even more of a serene way to look at things when in crisis.

UNSOLICITED BONUS ADVICE:
Being called PC is way better than acting comfortable when somebody is acting like a dickhead. I'm very sure of it. (I'm not actually sure if it's okay to say "dickhead" though.)
This column is now textable! You can send questions to 510-585-4357 (510-585-HELP) or, if you're the Ben Weasel sort, you can call me a "diaper baby" from your smart phone. Save the number, or just send an email like some sort of a commoner: askmrr@mail.com



"Gimme, gimme, gimme... don't ask what for."
—Old American proverb
"1, 2, 3, 4, who's punk, what's the score?"
—Ancient koan

So I've got an honest question for all of you punks out there. Exactly what is the difference between a benefit show and a Kickstarter? No, seriously. I'm not trolling here. It's 2014 and things in punk are *way* different than they were five, ten, fifteen years ago. Hell, everything is different—internet life is here to stay, folks. The world has changed, and punk has with it, and we should really figure out what the hell is going on.

It's funny cause I started writing this column before I saw Kickstopper's letter to Mr. R in last month's issue—so I guess it goes to show that the whole crowdfunding thing is actually an issue in punk these days. For the most part I agree with Mr. R's advice/opinion, but not fully—which to anyone who knows me probably isn't much of a surprise.

In the process of getting my new zine together I threw a question out to my internet friends about crowdfunding. I asked how people would feel about me using Kickstarter to help raise money for some of the initial overhead costs of starting a professionally printed zine. I don't really know the differences between Kickstarter or Indiegogo and the various other specific crowdfunding sites, so I meant it as a catchall term. You know, like "xerox," or "band-aid." The responses weren't all that surprising. Most people were either 100% for it or 100% against it. And this brings to be the initial question of this column—what's actually the difference between a benefit show and internet crowdfunding?

Now, the obvious difference is that one is a show and one is a website. But in asking that question I'm also asking how we as punks feel about exchanging the money that is necessary to get things made in this capitalist system that we loath, yet have to exist within? I also asked The Question to a couple of my friends, and I was honestly surprised with a common response—the difference between a benefit show and crowdfunding is that with a benefit show you're giving people something in exchange for their money.

This response makes complete sense. Punk shows rule. They're one of the best things ever. But at the same time, punk shows are always local events. You're limited to the people who can get to the show. I've only been living in the Bay for ten months. I know *far* more people in other places in the country than here that would most likely go to a benefit show for a project of mine. But they can't.

One friend replied to The Question with, "Crowd funding is not DIY. It is in fact the definition of DIFM (do it for me)...A benefit show is a thing. A fun thing that somebody put together to help raise money for something/someone that they care enough [about] to put the time and energy into creating a good event. A crowd funding campaign is just asking people for money, maybe making a shitty video." Then came a lot of comments about whether or not crowdfunding was "punk" (my, how self-conscious we punks always are!). Then came a different friend with an interesting response

that got me really thinking more deeply about all this, "Unless there is already an abundance of funds, I see no problem with asking for money from willing donators [sic]. The crap above about how it isn't punk or whatever because you aren't providing a fucking commodity of some kind is pretty frustrating to hear. What are we here, libertarians?" Damn.

That's a *really* good point. In a world where we strive to make punk as inclusive as possible and always hope to have the punks with money help support the ones without (in such forms as cooking food for touring bands, workplace hookups, loose donations at the door, and "no one turned away for lack of funds"), why all of a sudden do we demand immediate compensation for a punk project because it's being asked on the internet?

Obviously, this is going to go back to the internet. Most things with me often do. But this is different. Believe me. Like so many other groups of people, punks are having to adapt to the overarching effects of internet/digital culture supplanting the previous status quo. We've all pretty much agreed that the Five Dollar Show is a thing of the past and that sometimes asking upwards of $10 for show can still be "DIY," so what about the effects of the internet on DIY?

The magazine you're holding has a longstanding editorial rule that in today's world seems almost quaint. That rule is that if a band is on MTV they are no longer considered DIY by *MRR* standards, and therefore doesn't fall under the magazines coverage. Seems pretty simple and straightforward—at least when there was a time that MTV had bands (rock bands, even!) on it. MTV is part of the corporate world, the antithesis of DIY. But these days things are no so clear-cut and obvious to all.

For example, Facebook.

If the spirit of the law was that being promoted via a giant multi-million dollar corporation is inherently not DIY, then what about a band being promoted via a company which, as of 9/9/14 was valued at $201.6 billion? Now, I can already hear the arguments coming that Facebook doesn't *actually* promote a band, and that a band still has to promote itself on Facebook. That's a valid point to make, though I personally don't think it holds up the weight of $201,600,000,000.

Now, am I saying that being on Facebook is selling out? No. Yes. I don't know. That's what I'm trying to figure out here with you. Things are different. So very different. We rely on billion dollar companies like Facebook and Twitter to get our messages across. From Cairo to Oakland to Ferguson, these corporations can, in a way, be used in a completely subversive and radical way. But at the same time when punk bands (loosely defined) like Chumbawamba and Rage Against the Machine espoused unarguably radical ideologies on the dollar of corporations like EMI or Sony, to the dustbin of credibility they went!

Am I defending these bands' decisions to sign to major labels? Fuck, I don't know. If you had asked me when I was 14, 21, or 27 I would have unhesitantly cried, "Sellouts!" But not only was I younger, but things were (at least a little bit) easier to figure out. Slightly more obvious.

But before we go any further, let me digress for a second...I heard someone once use the argument of "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" in the case of using corporate money to get radical ideas across. In response to that I say, kindly please shut the fuck up. If you're gonna compare Audre Lorde's feminist criticisms to your little punk world you really need to eat shit and die. Like, not soon enough.

Now back to what I was getting at...wait, what exactly was it that I was getting at? Oh yeah, I'm old and things aren't the same and now I have to rethink things I stopped thinking about years ago and it's scary and uncomfortable and I don't like to be scared and uncomfortable because it's a complete drag.

Time is always moving forward and things are always changing. Even in punk. A perfect example is *MRR* itself. This year marked a *giant* change in the history of the magazine. 2014 marked the year in which *MRR* (the zine) has existed longer without Tim Yohannan than it did with him. *Maximum* will always be Tim's zine, but realistically it's been the *idea* of Tim's zine longer than it was actually his zine. Fucking crazy. And there are things that were much more clear-cut in terms of defining DIY and punk back in 1982 that aren't so much in 2014. It's a crazy new world.

But even with so many changes in punk, there has always been one thing that has never changed and will never change—punk is a community. Punks are everywhere and are always looking for, and looking out for, each other. And that's why the question of "selling out" and what's "punk" is real. Punks want to support other punks, not people posing as punks. No one wants to book, or put out a record for, or buy a shirt from a band who pulls their mask off *Scooby Doo* style to reveal a bullshit lame-o capitalist money grabber.

We give to our punk community only because it's our community. Not even hoping to get something back. Giving to punk *is* getting something back. So when bands take money from corporations instead of punks we look at them differently. If you need more than punk can give, you don't really need punk. And if you don't need punk, then I don't think it would be wrong to say that you're not punk.

So, The Question: is using crowdfunding selling out or is it keeping with DIY? Is it punk, or not? Punks used to completely shun any corporate involvement with punk because it used to inherently mean that punk was a product—that punk was something that could be bought and sold by these companies. But these new corporations have figured something out that almost no other generation of corporations did—instead of selling people a product, loan them a tool. You don't buy Facebook or Twitter, you use them. These companies are providing corporate DIY tools.

But then again, so is the local multi-million electric company. Or multi-national gasoline companies. As the bassist from the Black Lips once said in criticism of the slippery slope of DIY punk ethics (specifically in slagging this magazine), "...then don't use a computer, don't use a car, don't drink Coca-Cola. Move to a field, grow your own food." *MRR* is on Facebook. And Twitter. Things are weird now. What would Tim Yo say about this? Who knows. That's a question beyond unanswerable. What would George Beauchamp think of Discharge? Or George Melies of *Avatar*?

Again, I don't have any answers to any of this mess. Only more questions. I think crowdfunding can be just as tasteless as a stupid, greedy benefit show. Sometimes I look at crowdfunding for things like to start a label that wants to make things like hardcarved wooden cases for their limited press tape releases asking for $11,000 and I want to ragequit "DIY culture" altogether.

But then I also see some band crowdfunding for a quality used van because they live in Dogshit, Nowhere USA, where it's really hard to raise enough money to buy a quality vehicle, so they can get out of their 25 punk town and be a more active part of our community and think to myself "man, this internet crowdfunding stuff is pretty wild and cool."

So let's talk more about crowdfunding, and the internet as a whole in DIY punk. And let's not immediately jump to "It's not punk!" or "It's punk!" Let's get into the nitty gritty, the nuance, the awkward, the gray areas of DIY and punk. I wanna hear something that I haven't heard in a long time—actual discussion. We can't afford to tell each other to fuck off because we don't agree 100% with each other. There's a whole other 99.9% of the world telling us to fuck off every second of every day. Let's make each other uncomfortable and talk about the little things that we would rather not talk about. Things we feel like we totally know and understand. 'Cause chances are there's a lot of stuff, especially new concepts like crowdfunding that we don't have a grip on at all.

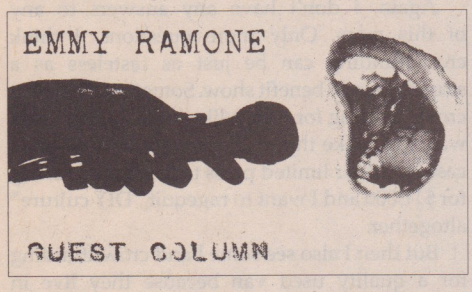
ENDNOTES:

1) I'm serious, let's talk about it! Shoot an email to stayinchicago@hotmail.com and I'll chat it up with you. Or better yet, shoot one to the letters section of *MRR* (mrr@maximumrocknroll.com) and let everyone get in on the conversation. We're never gonna completely figure it out, but the more voices, the more ideas we have to work with!

2) I recently caught a DIY, all-ages basement show in San Francisco at Vacation. It's nice to see that even at a time when the city seems to be norming up and squeezed, one punk at a time, into Oakland that people are still doing weird shows in weird basements.

3) Speaking of weird stuff in basements, I recently caught a performance by W. Kamau Bell in the basement of Lost Weekend Video. Needless to say, it was fucking hilarious and amazing. The video store is approaching its 20th anniversary in the Mission neighborhood of SF

and even with turning its tiny basement into a rad-as-fuck venue for comedy, it's still facing the same financial hardships that a lot of older, smaller businesses are in SF these days. If you're a SF movie nerd, or a Bay dweller who finds themselves in the city often, I recommend going and supporting them. Video stores rule. Netflix is *not* just as good as a room with thousands of movies picked out by nerds who are there to tell you everything you'd ever want to know about anything in that room. Or just catch a DIY basement comedy show. You're a punk, you like basements. Might as well, right?



Ever get the feeling you're living in a cage and then wonder why everything outside is deteriorating faster than you?
–Doc Dart

The world has gone so undoubtedly to shit in 2014 it is nearly impossible to comprehend. The idea of anyone in the world believing in a future or in hope is so completely asinine that just the thought gives me a throbbing headache. We live in a hopeless, disgusting society that turns everyone into humanoids going headfirst into their own bleak futures, so how can we as punks in 2014 roll over and die on our pile of hip bootlegged shirts? If you don't wanna kick and scream right now you should be fucking embarrassed. I think everyone in 2014 is miserable, a freak, or a shithead. I mean, we live in a world that finds enjoyment in being on a website that lets you hear what your Aunt Suzy has to say about current events, how could you not be fucking losing it? What can we do to set ourselves apart? At what point do we get tired of posting links to combat Aunt Suzy and start fucking living? It's time to stand up or stand out.

On to the point, here is some punk that at least on the surface is standing up or standing out right now.

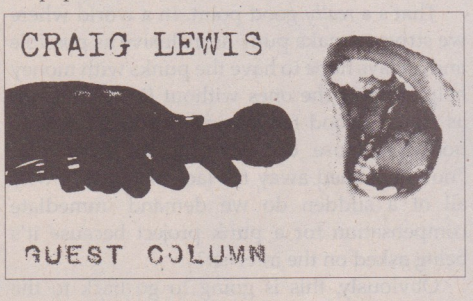
I'm pretty sure some people truly believe I hate every band in New York but that just ain't the case. Ever since this IVY LP dropped I have been jamming that shit so far into my eardrums it truly hurts. A part of me is very certain that they created my dream punk record and after probably one billion listens I'm still not fading away from that stance. Like a slug sucking the life out of my brain, this record sends my every action into a hypnotic groove. The drums bang on your skull like a jackhammer, the way punk music should be. They are the kind of drums that remind me of sitting in a tiny desk in grade school and just banging away at the desk with ADD ticks. An anxious feeling that just puts nails on the chalkboard to everyone around you, but is a release so necessary for you. The two guitars are executed perfectly with riffs that hold a catchy groove to them and mixed with such perfect noise and solos. It couples a psychedelic sound and a raw sound in a way that pushes them away from both. The bass gives songs both a bouncing familiar punk sound and a necessary structured groove. This all leads to the unsurprising perfection found in the vocals. The winding cry comes out in an almost haunting fashion over the music. It fits like a glove amongst every other sound on this record. All of this concocts itself into the perfect disgusting display of raw energy that throws itself into the bleak. The record is currently one I'm holding in high regard—it hit me fucking fast and I can't step away. Favorite track is "Got No; Instinct/Wardsback." Don't be a dingus. Don't sleep on this record.

YOU'RE NOT SAFE ON THE INTERNET!

Rarely do I stop in my tracks after hearing a single song but I had to with this one. On the other side of the country new LA band VIAL released a song titled "You're Not Safe" that really leaves you with such a feeling. A song with driving riffs and a commanding chorus that will leave you pumping your fists and singing along when you least expect it. Reminds me a lot of ROSE CROSS but I think it's got a lot more power behind it. The sounds of bands like HONEY BANE or the BAGS captured with a certain snot and anger that has begun to trademark the current punk generation. What's not to love about that? A+ song, can't wait for a record.

The other day I was blessed with a visit from the slow and windy NOLA punk outfit MYSTIC INANE. With their new 7" *Deep Creep* they really get themselves stuck in my head. The title track starts us off with a rough sounding song that sits rather miserably in your memory. The vocals screech and cry slowly as the song sputters along. This band tends to have choruses that come off to me as very slow versions of '80s hardcore songs. It comes off to me as almost as a backhanded compliment, like when bands cover "Ready to Fight" really slow. Hardcore can be sick but it ain't gonna work just puked up over and over again. I dunno—I dig it. Next up is "Blue Manhattan," a song that has a pretty interesting guitar solo throughout the verse, and then a rough and tough riff in the chorus. Also did I mention the sick bass lines? But for me the 7" is really made with the closing track "I Believe in UFOs." This song does a good job at combining everything this band has offered us thus far: bouncy guitar riffs, strong bass lines, screeching verses and super catchy howls on the chorus. I dare you to listen to this song and not start sing "U F O O O OHZ" as you walk around the house. MYSTIC INANE keeps the mid/slow tempo (almost psychedelic) vibe interesting with their guitar solos and keeps it fun with their vocals and slam worthy bass lines. I'm really into this band right now. Can't really remember the last slower/mid tempo band I got down on like this but I ain't complaining.

That's all I really got for ya cretins this month, reason being I just locked myself in my room writing *Cretins of Distortion* #4. It's got exclusively new bands covered in it and interviews with LAFFING GAS, the WRONG, and FOREIGN LAWNS. If you want a copy find me at emmyeatsbutts@gmail.com or write me at 2656 Dayton Ave, Columbus, OH 43202. Pick it up, punk out or die.



Hello, my name is Craig and I am a punk rocker and a mental health counselor. I also experience mental health struggles. I live in Salem, Massachusetts, which many reading may remember from their high school history classes as being the site of the witch trials in the 1620s, during which several people were burned at the stake for allegedly being witches. I live here with my girlfriend and our two cat-sons, Max and JB. I have a pretty good life—however, things have not always been so great.

As a semi-regular columnist here, I wan to talk about the trials and tribulations of being a punk rocker who struggles with his mental health. I have experience with addiction and trauma, as you may well imagine, and I will discuss those very pertinent topics here as well. Please read if you want to learn more about my experiences as a punk rocker who openly experiences (and acknowledges) having mental health struggles and my relationship with and to the punk scene.

At age 41, I find myself in a pretty interesting place in life. I don't go to very many shows, opting instead to stay home and listen to music and hang out with my previously mentioned family. I do still identify as a punk rocker 100% and I can't imagine not having punk rock being a major part of my life. However, my relationship with the scene has not always been so healthy and at times my relationship with it was absolutely destructive and dangerous. This is my reality. Some people still have strong feelings about me that don't feel very fair to. However, they can fuck off! To those people who have legitimate gripes with me: your gripes are likely quite valid and I encourage you to seek me out. I would like to take responsibility for whatever it is I said or did, as I know that I have made mistakes. I don't want to hurt anyone and if I have, I want to do my best to make amends and accept responsibility.

Hmmm, so punk rock and mental health—where have we heard those words before (in the same sentence)? Well, usually instead of the words mental health, the words are mental illness, or crazy, or nutjob, or psycho. I once read something that some guy posted online that said, "Crusty Craig was legally insane!" Well,

that is news to me. Sure, I struggled and was an out-of-control walking disaster, no doubt about that. What I want to know is: if I came to the punk scene because it was a safe place for me to be a freak, a weirdo, and an outcast, then how is it that I then became a freak, weirdo, and an outcast in the punk rock scene and community? Isn't this supposed to be a safe haven where I can be accepted and supported? In many ways, I have been. On the other hand, I have also been vilified, stigmatized and ostracized.

One thing that I think I really needed from my peers over the years was support and empathy. Many people were aware that I was suffering and there have been many people who sincerely looked out for me and tried to stand by me the best they could without being too damaged by being a friend of mine. I truly appreciate all of you who stood by me. I know now that it often was not very easy to be my friend. I am lucky to have had as many people who gave me a chance as I did. Thank you to all of you.

There are others who shunned me. In many situations, I may have created the problems that resulted in me being shunned. I wish that didn't happen (both being shunned, and yet even more deeply painful for me, having contributed to my being shunned). Often, I was at the root of the problems that I was having. Unfortunately, back in those days, I was very unhealthy and I was unable to see the reality of what was happening around me, to me, and by me, and I had no idea how to break free from the chains that bound me. These chains bound me to misery, self-hate, and despair.

Make no mistake—while I actively contributed to the social problems that befell me, this was in no way what I wanted. If you can give me some breathing room here I would greatly appreciate it. I detested that I was creating, causing, and contributing to the issues, often scandals, and what we call "shit talking" yet I was so mentally unstable that I did not know how to stop or prevent these incidents from continuously occurring. This life was a living nightmare and this is what I experienced.

Over the past several years, I have done an immense amount of introspective self-examination of myself, my thoughts and my actions, in order to try and gain a handle on the chaos that was my life, chaos that I was often the source of. I have made a ton of progress. Life is so much better than it ever has been before. I have learned that all my experiences were necessary for me to be able to get to where I am today and to become the person that I am proud to be today. I've had to learn so many excruciating and painfully difficult lessons—very much so the hard way. This sucked for me and I bear the scars to this day of the mental and physical torture that allowed for me to begin to grow into a happier and healthier person. Yet it was all necessary.

I don't regret my life. I don't regret my experiences. Every last tragic and horrendous meltdown or incident got me to where I am today. I am a generally stable, happy, healthy, and quite satisfied with life, 41-year-old punk rocker. I want to share with others how I got to this wonderful, yet still challenging, point in my life so that others don't have to suffer as much as I have. Too many of our friends have taken their own lives. Too many of our friends have self-medicated to such a degree that they overdosed, or were locked in jail, or died in some reckless, heartbreaking way. I want to do my part to help heal my community. I want to share my experiences with you in these pages so that you can learn from my mistakes. No one should go through what I did. I want no one to suffer in the way I have. I want those in my community to seek out assistance in improving their lives and their situations so that they can transcend the feelings that bring us to suicide, self-medication and reckless death.

I will not allow my suffering to be wasted.

punksinrecovery.com/betterdaysrecovery.com.

Last year around this time I was leaving our warehouse space in San Jose. It was queued up to be demolished and turned into a shitty apartment complex with a huge pool, a pool that I planned to pee in as soon as the structure was finished. I was living on a friend's couch and preparing to live alone for the first time ever. The air was whispering for me to leave San Jose, because so many things were ending, and recovering from that in the presence of others seemed basically unimaginable. Also, finding a place I could afford in the town I grew up in seemed very unlikely. I was ready to follow the arrows on the road and compare coastlines, scared I would find the same cracks in the road in an unfamiliar place, but also I felt so foreign in my own skin at the moment. When I'd look up I could see that a good majority of my friends were feeling the same, we were following each other, but getting lost every time, Struggling to write the story about "how to not die alone."

This week, a year later, I'm okay, tumbling along, patching up my wounds. Feeling worn down—not necessarily a bad thing just re-working/thinking my life week by week. I know above all I want to be available and able to support my friends both physically and mentally, I want to look people in the eyes as they talk to me and not break the contact. I want to help cover the landslides and not avoid the social landmines.

While doing all this reworking I've had two people ask me in the last month why I still like punk. It might have even been three people! It seems like all I hear is how upset people are about it, which is understandable. Most current punk/hardcore scenes are very frustrating to me, a lot of theater and/or annoying "humor" in the offensive often-oppressive behavior, which is praised. I get caught up in the whirlwind of bullshit and am guilty of being a curmudgeon at times. I fall in line with the circular conversations of just complaining about punk outside of a punk show, but I still go every week and I still head nod to every riff even if it's weak.

While on a recent Permanent Ruin tour I picked up a fanzine by Emmy in Columbus, OH, called *Cretins of Distortion*. The content of the fanzine was great and it's obvious he puts a lot of work into it. The best part was that there was next to no shit talk or complaining. Its focus was just how stoked he was on the music and things he likes and it was probably one of the most refreshing things that's happened to me in the last year. It's easy to feel discouraged before you even start something; we've built this culture of negative thoughts where everyone also walks on eggshells. It's imperative that we also recognize the good things that people do and give more of ourselves and our energy towards the positive forces in our respective "scenes".

Are loose comments about what's broken all you can offer?

It's important we appreciate all the people not afraid to put themselves in vulnerable situations like booking shows/events, doing radio shows, making zines, or even making the trips to shows every week and truly risking a lot of themselves for not much pay out. Most attention goes towards the creeps and it can be discouraging to the people working towards positive change or just working hard in general to believe in this loser's game.

There is a lot to be upset or disheartened by and things should be called out, but there is also *so much* power and so many great things that punk does. Every time I'm surrounded by selected family whom I have met through punk/hardcore and am comfortable enough to be quiet as well as loud, or given space to be whatever I feel, I realize I still like punk because it is survival. I don't know how else to exist and existing itself is a form of activism sometimes. Playing music is a form of resistance, a form that I am indebted to. At 15 I was kicked out of my house and within a year was without a home and dropped out of school. My social life was and still is punk shows and I don't know where I'd be if it weren't for punk.

A lot of things these days feel like they are on a path to crush culture and create alienating landscapes, I find myself just drifting along in its current un-anchored, other times floating, like a stone watching it all pass me by. It is my core group of friends/family that pull me up—they are always pushing me to do better and be better. Just seeing the things they do or how they are surviving their pasts or even just standing on a corner laughing for five minutes is enough to jostle the gears in my head most days.

I can't find a purpose for everything I do sometimes, but the intention is there, anger repurposed in the most constructive ways I know.

There is always a fear of disconnection, that one day the pain will be too much and I'll never be able to reform. I've watched that rug slip from under others many times before in my life. Reassurance of this connection is weird. Sex, conversation, music, touch and rituals—they fill the spaces between the tiles, filling deep holes that feel like they are widening each time. Getting lost in the confusing feelings they bring up is important and vital. I like that pain, that type is addicting.

Freezing within the Cold War, or Punk Within the Socialist States, Part 1

In light of this special Yugoslavian issue, I felt it would be interesting to write about the environment that these bands dwelt in, as well as bands in other socialist states, both past and current. How did these bands fare? Did the states support them? It could be comfortably said that these states failed to actually achieve any success, and are more famous for their censorship and repression than the actual communist dream. Yet, it is not so simple to say that, as some of these bands saw more success than any of our Western bands. The double-edged sword of this, while maybe getting the funding, would also mean being targets as subversives. The governments never really viewed punks as trustworthy people, and some felt that rock'n'roll was capitalist indulgence. Here, we will see the varieties of ideology within punk.

Omsk's ГРАЖДАНСКАЯ ОБОРОНА (GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA / "CIVIL DEFENSE")—one of the most known punk bands of the Soviet Union—existed from 1984 to 2008 when Igor Letov died. During its early years, this band was staunchly against the Soviet Union's authoritarianism—and some could say, communism in general. They were not opposition communists, but more anarchists. Igor's mother went to the KGB saying that her son's band was an anti-Soviet terrorist cell, and this spurred off years of mental institutions, threats, and chasing. You could imagine further hate of the USSR after the sketchy death of Yanka Dyagilevna, a former bandmate and lover who also had her own work (it was never fully resolved as suicide or accident). Yet, there is a line in "Всё идёт по плану" ("Everything Goes According to Plan") that translates to "Only our grandfather Lenin was a good leader, all the others are such shit".

Tracing USSR punk political lines is confusing, since the failure of Soviet communism put a bad taste in many mouths over the ideology in general. Sometimes, this could create anything from anarchists, opposition communists, nationalists or fascists—sometimes, it could be a mixture of that; the rebellion could just be to do whatever the government said not to do. In the Czechoslovakia in the eighties, it was not terribly unusual for bands to be racist, since the government campaigned against racism. There could even be nationalists at ГРАЖДАНСКАЯ ОБОРОНА shows, as the band turned nationalist after the fall of the Soviet Union. The real interesting point in their history was Letov's joining the National Bolshevik Party in the nineties. This party is not officially acknowledged by Russia, after incidents like the Party hitting politicans with tomatoes or mayonaise (after being banned, they attacked a polling station with smoke bombs). Here is where Russian politics gets tricky: the National Bolsheviks are a "communist" party, yet they adhere to a mixture of nationalism and direct action seen from the Maoist cultural revolution—citing that the definition of communism was lost by the Communist Party. Hell, the only difference between their flag and the Nazi flag is the hammer and sickle instead of the swastika—they even do the armbands. They also believe in using imperialism to spread the doctrine of communism. The party's founder was even friends with Le Pen of France's National Front Party. Letov even reached to leadership with the Party, while still claiming to be an anarchist.

It would be rather shameful to discuss ГРАЖДАНСКАЯ ОБОРОНА without giving more light to Yanka Dyagilevna (Igor Letov's companion and bandmate). Her own work could almost be considered an Eastern NICO or PATTI SMITH. Equipped with a lifetime love (as short as her life was) of poetry, and teaching herself to play guitar, she soon joined ГРАЖДАНСКАЯ ОБОРОНА while she was on the run from authorities with Letov. She soon started writing her own work, which was never officially released during her lifetime. Her lyrics would have ironic communist slogans and Soviet anthems, accompanied with the despair of Russian life. However, with growing tragedies and depressive tendencies, her life with Letov disintegrated as a result of his despotism within band life as well as home life, and the suicide of her friend, Sasha Bashlechev, caused her to withdraw. After her final performance in 1991, she disappeared to her family home in Novosibirsk. She soon was found dead in the Inya River at the age of twenty-four, where the cause of death was never confirmed. Before his death, Letov remastered all of her work.

Soviet punk cannot only be limited to Russia. One example would be Estonia, leading on to Tallinn's JMKE. By the time that they formed in 1986, it could be said that Soviet control was rather lenient in Estonia, and JMKE's cynical humor in their anarchist lyrics was well-received by many (later in their existence, they would even cover old czarist march songs). They played on an Estonian television show, and won a contest to get a free European vacation that never actually happened. In 1989, they managed to play the Leftist Forum in Finland to a crowd of communists. Their first full-length made it abroad and received good reviews. They managed to tour a good portion of Europe and put out a handful of records through Finland. JMKE is a band to this day.

In Georgia—the land of Josef Stalin—punk existed as well. RETSEPTI was started in 1987 in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi by band leader Lado Burduli. Their name means "recipe" or "prescription." Burduli said that they chose that name to give a cure for Soviet society's problems. RETSEPTI were a self-proclaimed non-comformist, gothic and punk band. Their music is rather haunting, and the lyrics are depressing—lots of them were about longing for someone, and freezing or starving in bed, with an occasional call for god. They were clearly anti-Soviet, but beyond that, they were quiet. Georgian society was still much more conservative than Russian society, and Burduli once recalled when he and his first wife were chased down a road by angry teenagers or once kidnapped by thugs. The KGB would also give them a hard time for looking different, and Burduli was arrested on this account twice. He said in an interview that punk music was much better under communist time, because of the adrenalin. However, unlike ГРАЖДАНСКАЯ ОБОРОНА, they were able to play more freely (though with only seven live performances, their lifespan was short) and even played the Tbilisi Spring Rhythms festival, which gathered rock bands from all over the USSR. They managed to play on television a few times as well; they also had a music video that censors did not allow, and it was eventually lost. Music from the US and Western Europe seemed to have flowed somewhat freely into Georgia, by the bands that RETSEPTI said that had influenced them at the time: the DEAD KENNEDYS, BAUHAUS, SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES, the CURE, and the RAMONES. Yet, their time was short, and civil war came—the band ended, and members would commit suicide and be committed to mental institutions, while two others kept playing music or moved to France as a photographer. After the war, electricity and musicians were sparse, and in the early 1990s Burduli ended up just playing solo acoustic sets in the early 1990s, since reuniting RETSEPTI became impossible. Afterwards, Burduli became committed to exposing Georgian rock to the outside world. Many of the recordings degraded in quality a little, after Burduli found a tape reel in an empty room. It was in a cabinet of the general music director of Georgian State Television, which was abandoned during the civil war; he found it two years after the war ended. In an interview after the band's existence and the war, Burduli said that in the communist era, there was still a desire to try something new, and yet the promotion was difficult due to government censorship, but in post-communist Georgia, mainstream music is more heavily reproduced and that the government still runs it.

The non-aligned Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was a different beast, since it was not really within the Iron Curtain on either side. Much of the Left within the Yugoslavian region maintain nostalgia (perhaps more so than East Germany had), since as far as socialist states go, this could be credited as one of the more successful ones. Having no ties to the Eastern Bloc or the Soviet Union, it could choose its own rules without Soviet pressure. The state had no qualms with western influence, and things like punk was covered within the media (GBH, SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES, DISCHARGE, etc. toured there). As a result of its open gates for western culture, Yugoslavia was the first known socialist state to have punk bands, and there were a lot.

As far as dissidence goes, there was still some—for example, Novi Sad's PEKINŠKA PATKA ("Peking Duck") used shock to irritate authorities, like covering the communist youth work action song and replacing it with vulgar lyrics, singing "God Save Martin Bormann," and calling themselves "Orthodox punk" to troll the atheist tides of Yugoslav society. The singer was a teacher, and the government wanted him fired, but people filled out a petition for him to keep his job, and by law the government had to accept it. Despite the wide culturalism of Yugoslavia, the government could also declare material as "kitsch" ("distasteful") and issue additional tax. Dissidence in Yugoslavia would also seem much milder than much of their neighbors. Some bands would just simply address social problems that still existed. Many bands, like ELEKTRIČNI ORGAZAM, would not exactly jump into politics.

While Yugoslavian dissidence could be anti-authoritarian and anti-chauvinist, sometimes, like the rest of the socialist states, the sake of rebellion also brought in fascism. IV REICH, a Slovenian Nazi band (not the Spanish one), was one of those bands. IV REICH was affiliated with Nazi skins, and PANKRTI'S manager would refuse to work with them. They were even arrested and put on trial for racism before they could release any albums. This incident and the typical attitude of punk caused suspicion towards the punk subculture, and later generations would receive less exposure, however, it remained to see some success.

Censorship seemed to be the main theme of discontent, rather than the system as a whole, almost like a musical version of Bulgakhov's *The Master and Margarita*. Bands like BORGHESIA would use imagery of repressed and taboo subjects (BORGHESIA also saw attention out in the Western world, in magazines and even getting on American and Canadian labels).

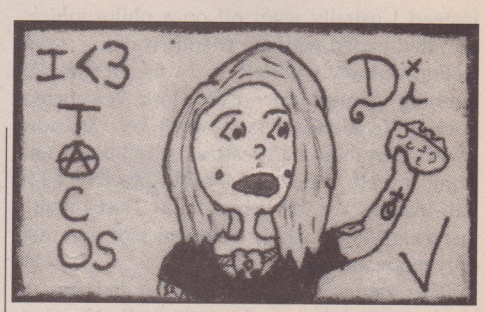
PANKRTI ("Bastards") formed in 1976 or 1977 in Ljubljiana as one of the earliest punk bands in Yugoslavia. PANKRTI even saw some decent success, especially with their second album, *Državni Ljubimci* (*State Lovers*), which was awarded best Yugoslav album of the year in 1984. They covered "Bandiera Rossa," an Italian communist revolutionary song (KUD IDIJOTI also covered this song). They made a Beatles pun over *The White Album* on their third record, calling it *Rdeči* (*Red Album*)—the color red being for obvious reasons. This does not go to say that they were fully supportive of their government. Their manager, Igor Vidmar even got detained for confusing his DEAD KENNEDYS' "Nazi Punks Fuck Off" patch as being an actual Nazi badge. Vidmar also later lamented that their liberal democracy has less work than the socialist republic.

How can one talk of Yugoslavia without talking about Ljubljana's TOŽIBABE? They are the first known all-female band in Yugoslavia—especially writing their own material and determining their own direction—a dark and brooding style pounded out on UBR's equipment. While their lyrics were mostly introspective, they still spoke of a repressive censorship. They recalled almost daily harassment by the police, but never really any arrests. Organizing gigs was never difficult, and even the authorities would sometimes organize their events—one festival in which they successfully requested the entire hardcore punk community join. Members of BORGHESIA, possibly workers at a student campus, helped them film a video. Unfortunately, they had few releases.

To pair nicely with TOŽIBABE, the band that they did a split with—U.B.R. (UPORNIKI BEZ RAZLOGA, or "Rebels without a Cause")—was another seminal band out of Ljubljana. Their name had to do with the idea that the government, as well as general society, automatically considered them "rebels without a cause." This band sang as a protest against the "destruction of man's subjectivity and individuality." They never opposed communism, but did actively oppose opportunist communists, the ones with the Mercedes. They found boredom in lyrics in the vein of "fuck the system", and desired something more. Like TOŽIBABE, they released a small amount: a few tapes, and compilation contributions.

The breaking up of Yugoslavia created strained times for those who lived there. What is now known as Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, Albania, Macedonia, and so on and so on mostly rose out of extreme bloodshed. Some punks would get conscripted into the army during these wars (in Yugoslavia, men were required fifteen months in the People's Army). Fascism rose up in many countries, and many bands even began to adhere to nationalist chauvinism. It became dangerous to even speak out against nationalism, or anything ultra-right. For example, Metelkova City Autonomous Cultural Center (built out of old squatted barracks) was attacked by Nazi skins, since it hosted punks, homosexuals, ecological and lesbian and gay rights activists. Yet, anti-war anthems did begin to surface. One outspoken opponent to nationalism just so happened to be someone who was charged with murder and spent his life in and out of mental institutions: SATAN PANONSKI (one could consider him similar to G.G. ALLIN). He later joined Croatian forces and was mysteriously killed.

To be continued... welcometochernobyl@yahoo.com.



"When the world is sick, can't no one be well, but I dreamt we were all beautiful and strong"

I have never accepted the simple truth, because "true" is not a simple concept. Especially when it comes to remembering the past. As a child in Sunday school at a Catholic church I was a thorn. Why would God create Hell? Why are we born with sin if God loves us? If God is real, where is he now? I never did get any satisfactory answers so I stopped believing in God. I never found any reasons to start until I was a bit older and other children and their parents took issue with my loss of faith. Some friends simply refused to talk to me about religion, and those were the kind ones. Some took it upon themselves to save me. They invited me to "parties" that were actually bible studies. On two occasions I began to date someone to find out there was a hidden condition that we could only make it official if I accepted to Holy Spirit. Then there were those who simply exiled me, and did their best to ostracize me from my communities. Grand Rapids, Michigan was a lonely, rough place for a teenage heathen when I was growing up.

I have always been able to turn my anger into power, a power I always try to stand in. I began to research religions across the world and throughout history with vigor. It was rejecting the Bible that finally motivated me to read the damn thing, because, know your enemy, right? I started a blog called The New Agnosticism that became fairly infamous in my area. It was half me, starting internet flame wars, trolling evangelical teens and starting shit. The other half was a continually updated manifesto of sorts about how to be a decent person. It was very basic, centered around respect and with a goal to help people realize that there are no universal truths, especially in a foundation as shaky as creed. When it was discovered that I was the person behind the blog, I saw many friends and classmates turn their back on me, and I was even banned from attending a friend's prom! I was going about it like Keith Olbermann, but at fifteen it's pretty much expected that you are a bit of a blowhard.

A question I was often asked is, "Why don't you just believe in God, just in case he's real? Why are you so mad?" At that age I didn't have a good response. I wanted to say something that would be so prolific that my fiends would see the light like I had, that the *truth* was incomplete.

Instead I usually went off on a philosophical rant that ended with my friends walking away feeling verbally vomited on. I was left fuming. Nothing gained, friendship lost. I debated going in to the Godless closet to keep friends. I wish then that I had realized why I could not bring myself to believe. I could not live with half-truths. "We will never know God's plan" just meant "Stop asking questions kid" and that only made me more curious.

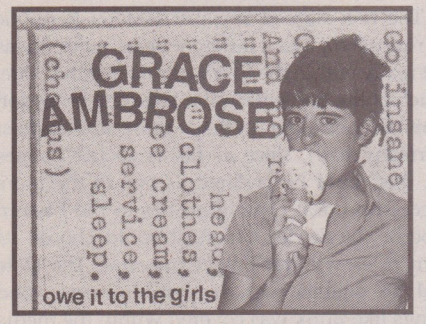
This same inclination is what led me to punk. I started early in rock'n'roll. My dad loved Metallica and AC/DC and Led Zeppelin. I started playing guitar in sixth grade, sitting in my bedroom trying to learn "Iron Man" and "Master of Puppets." I spent every allowance on CDs. In eighth grade I went in to my first independent record store, a shop called Vertigo in Grand Rapids. I saw the Dead Kennedys' logo and the cover of the *In God We Trust, Inc* EP hanging on the wall and knew I had found something I wasn't supposed to. It was so exciting. I left with Velvet Underground and Nico, DKs' Fresh *Fruit for Rotting Vegetables*, the Stooges' *Raw Power*, MC5's debut record, and *London Calling*. My dad didn't like punk. He thought the musicianship was lazy and it lacked the technicality and pop esthetic of arena metal. I all but walked away from metal for my new obsession. Finding out there were whole layers of rock I never knew existed was thrilling. I wanted to know who inspired whom, and when I found those records, I wanted to know who inspired the inspirations. I quickly learned I had found something big. I found out that the "truth," that the best bands ultimately get on MTV, was another fabrication, along with God. Soon after I started questioning everything, but I also started learning. Along the way, I learned that even the things I held as true could someday be otherwise. I feel that this is a common thread amongst all punks, or so I hope.

Finding out that there was a music underground was a huge reward for my curiosity but not all discoveries were happy findings. Learning about a new demo from a favorite artist is elating, while finding out the truths of capitalism, racism, and patriarchy were not so exciting. When I started to explore the politics and social structures that dictate our lives in the world, I could not walk away from the task to get to the bottom of it. Sadly, many punks and non-punks seem to be able to do this with ease. I don't fully understand how you can have one without the other.

This month came another anniversary of the 9-11 attacks on the WTCs. I am in no way patriotic or nationalistic but I do mourn for the thousands who lost their lives that day. It was a very sad event. It also changed the lives of Americans and people across the world in a very intense way as its legacy so far amounts to an increase in the violent police state worldwide and a massive change in our privacy. The stories of Islamophobic violence after the attack reminds me that these people are acting ignorantly on half-truths. Acting on beliefs that no people of Arab descent are citizens, and that all brown people are terrorists. If these people took any time to learn about Islam and Arab-American culture they would realize that the stories from the news, from their elected officials, from the government, were simply propaganda to gain support for a horrendous war. Many people have come around over a decade later, but the fact remains that being an Arab-American will never be the same, because of the media propaganda machine of our government.

Take it one step further down the rabbit hole. The attack on the WTCs is not the only, not even the most deadly, terrorist tragedy to date. In 1973 the CIA-/Nixon-/US-backed Pinochet regime led a violent coup on democratically elected Salvador Allende. The fear of communism drove Nixon's support of a violent attack and then set the path for Augusto Pinochet to take over Chile as dictator for seventeen years. During his reign thousands were murdered, social services and the education system were gutted and Chile, once known as the most economically stable country in South America, saw tens of thousands of its citizens flee for other countries, especially to Canada and Europe. Pinochet led a militarized dictatorship that employed the "Caravan of Death," a government sanctioned execution squad, that carried out the murder of activists, artists, musicians, and anyone deemed an enemy of the Pinochet Regime. Among the casualties was singer-songwriter Victor Jara.

The point of this information is, there is always a truth behind the truth that's most accessible. History is written by the victors and, inherently, that means there is always more to the story. This is true in everything. Behind the NFL is a legacy of violence against women. Behind Apple is a business model built on wage slavery and human rights atrocities. Information is powerful and its control is a very active market. This is why activists and radicals go missing and are routinely murdered. This is why union leaders for Coca-Cola in Columbia are killed and why Grand Juries are convened to catch eco-terrorists whose only damage lands on machines and buildings. If we pursue the full picture with the intensity we seek out new music we will all be much more informed, and with numbers and knowledge we have collective power, and I can't think of something more punk than that. Stop "waiting for the rev" and start asking lots of questions and don't stop until you get a satisfactory answer, then ask different questions. You can say, "Fuck the Police, Fuck Prisons" but you should know this is a mantra because of the systemic criminalization of the poor and the use of the prison industrial complex as a new form of Jim Crow, as opposed to hating cops because they may catch you speeding. Right now the world is sick, and everyone is suffering because of it, but the quickest way to healing is through community, and as the movement we already are, we just need to start utilizing what we already have. Up the *punx*!



I got a job. Well, I already had a more-than-full-time, mentally, emotionally, and physically all-consuming job here at the magazine, but now I also have one that pays. Three days a week, I bomb my bike down a hill that is way too steep for comfort or safety, ride a train underneath a giant body of water, and spend eight or so hours slinging records and packing up mail-order at an amazing shop and its associated reissue/archival label in the East Bay. It's a good job so far, not unlike this one, in that I drink coffee and listen to music all day every day, though more than one person has warned me: "Don't get burnt out on records." So far so good.

The shop and its related label do a lot of reissue work in the realm of classic punk and proto-punk records but they also excel in bringing out-of-print and inaccessible experimental music back into the world, making ownership of long-unavailable titles possible for those of us with normal budgets. I made a quasi-rule for myself: "No punk on the shop turntable." Instead I spent days last week listening to Brigitte Fontaine's *Comme à la Radio* and the Impacts' classic surf record *Wipe Out!*, Steve Reich's *Six Pianos/Music for Mallet Instruments, Voice And Organ*, and Alice Coltrane's *A Monastic Trio*. Back at the compound, I've holed up in my room listening to the masterful solo guitar work of Marisa Anderson, Jack Rose, and Chris Forsyth—fall music, if there every was any. I am missing the colors of changing leaves, but other than that, this seasonless existence is alright.

Part of this new job means that I spent yesterday's sunny afternoon behind a table at the Bay Area Record Fair, a collection of local Bay Area labels ranging from stalwarts like Alternative Tentacles and Slumberland, to newer outfits, like Hannah Lew's Crime on the Moon. It wasn't a horrible way to spend a day. We ate tater tots and drank more coffee and got to talk about records that we were excited about. I saw enough people whom I recognized that I didn't feel like a total alien in this new city and I got paid to do it all. B.A.R.F. (yes, B.A.R.F.) was in its second year and by all accounts, it seemed to only have improved, moving from a crowded backyard courtyard of a bar to occupying half a city block. I met a bunch of teenage punks who gave me their band's demo to be reviewed in *Maximum* and who promised that they'd come by the house to do shitwork. I suffered through moments of a few different local indie rock bands playing on the stage inside while waiting in the bathroom line and I made it through the afternoon without spending any of the money that I don't have, only tempted by a quick flip-through of Jello's personal records that AT was

trying to unload and the beautiful new Aislers Set reissues Slumberland put out (wimpy music rules, fuck you!).

The vast majority of the records there were new—used stock snuck in under the table—an event designed to celebrate a perceived fertility of the Bay Area when it comes to grassroots labels. It was refreshing—no collector talk about bonzers and scores, no stress to rifle through a box before anyone else got there. I love the object-ness of records—of flipping through my shelf in my room, of handing someone something to look at before we experience it together, of being forced to be stationary and present and physical in the act of listening. I do not give a fuck about your copy of *Pick Your King* on clear vinyl, especially after you told me that you've never played it. After I wrote my column last month, a copy of the Teddy and the Frat Girls 7" found its way into my possession. I paid more money for it than any other record I've ever purchased for myself (by a factor of three or so) and I felt a little bit sick when I did. For some reason, though, it felt important that I own it. Happy birthday to me, from me. I'm looking forward to inflicting its punishing sounds on anyone who enters my home for years. More my record buying style is flipping through bins in a shop, having friends hand me a record and say, "You have to hear this," and then passing my own recommendation back to them across the row. Part of the reason music exists is to be talked about and shared, not hoarded and sealed. Records that just take up space on a shelf to be trotted out as conversation starters couldn't be more boring to me.

I've only worked in the shop for a week or so, but every day multiple people come in off the street and ask, "So, vinyl's having a resurgence, yeah? People still listen to these?" I have to put on my customer service face and say, well, yes, ha ha, some people think they sound better, oh and isn't this nicer than scrolling through an iPod, and yes, of course, you idiot, people never really stopped. In terms of my own habits, I'm mostly interested in buying records directly from small labels and bands, some convoluted idea of an alternative economy. I'd rather buy ten new records than a classic (expensive) old one, lining creative pockets rather than collector ones. We're all trapped in this capitalist system, and if I'm just doomed to consume consume consume, I might as well spend that money in places where it helps a band get from one city to the next, or gives my favorite label the fuel to put out another mind-melting release. There were DIY labels of all types at the fair, and while many of them might not use that (somehow distinctively punk) term to describe themselves, they were putting definitively noncommercial releases out into the world, records that multiple passersby seemed totally stumped by after listening. Some of them were exciting and experimental, like the label that works closely with visual artists to produce unique objects, while many others were aspirationally capitalist. A friend told me about a conversation he had with one of our neighboring vendors, who was excited to share with him that he'd soon be teaching a college course about how to put out records. "It'll cover everything, y' know, marketing, design…"

I've put out one record in my life (Good Throb – *Fuck Off*, there are a scant few copies of the second pressing left, get in touch if you want one). I'm guilty of over-education (four years of college plus a masters degree). I own records that this dude put out—some of them are even green-taped on the shelves of this house. The thought of a college course about how to do something that mutants, glue-sniffers and criminals have done successfully for decades would almost be funny if it didn't make me feel so sick. I had a lot of help with that one LP I did (many thanks to Paco Mus, among others, for passing along knowledge, advice, and connections) but I'm certain I could have figured it out on my own. And I'm certainly glad that I had other punks to ask for help, rather than someone telling me "This Is How It's Done."

I got lucky and released something out that sold well, that will partially finance what will be the second and third releases I'll do (I can't tell you what they are until all the details are worked out but, I promise, you will be psyched!), but I only put it out because it was something that I thought *needed* to be in the world. Most of us aren't in a position where we can afford to lose the cost of a pressing for art's sake, but that doesn't mean that we need to occupy the opposite, the position where we're trying to cash in. Please, I'm begging you, stop reviving third-rate NYHC bands' early tapes as deluxe 45s, stop pressing newer bands' demos to vinyl, destroy the urge within yourself to kill a hundred trees in order to print the gatefold tip-on sleeve and twelve inserts on what you think is the newest crustlord magnum opus. Stop making ultra-limited editions, keep your records in print as long as they are finding an audience, ignore the price it last sold for on Discogs, and just make sure the people who want to hear the mania inside the neat square package can get their hands on it. Make music accessible and long-lasting, squash the desire to own the oldest and mintiest, and remember that these things are meant to be used, and loved, and partied on, that every split seam and dinged corner is an indication of a willingness to love the contents, not the packaging. We should be figuring out ways to fuel the production and dissemination of new sounds and disarming ideas, deconstructing the mystique and fetishism that surrounds certain releases, figuring out ways to give people access to songs too limited and rare for most wallets. Here at *Maximum*, we're about to embark on a big project that will hopefully make the sounds contained in the grooves on our heaving shelves much more accessible to punks around the world. Stay tuned and get in touch if you want to help.

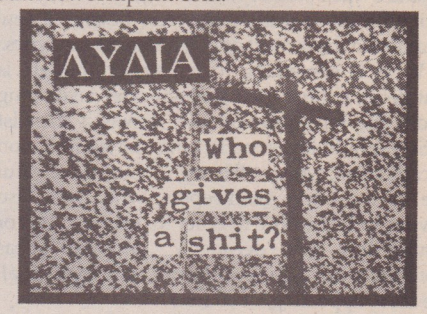
Destroy colored vinyl collector scum, dismantle the college industrial complex, send love notes, hate mail, questions and concerns to grace@maximumrocknroll.com.

ENDNOTES

1) I know I said no more demos pressed to vinyl (Make new music! Demos are demos for a reason!) but I've made an exception in my life for the Frau 12" (which we finally got for review at this magazine thanks to our official record-hound, ex-coord Golnar Nikpour—stay tuned for thee final word on it in next month's mag and send your records in for review, lest you face her wrath!). Their demo tape on a 12" slab, it's ferocious, no rules, shambolic, barely contained, and instantly classic; it will remain in my collection for life. Layla says it best in her review of their EP this month, "they are the first, last, and best—the only punk band." Watching them play is a revelatory experience and listening to the record is no different. US tour ASAP! Just give me enough time to make a band that can open the San Francisco gig.

2) We are having a bit of a mouse problem here at HQ. Mike pulled a record off the shelf with a dead mouse on the cover and we thought we'd spin it as a form of warning to her sisters. Imagine my surprise when it was an excellent compilation of Swiss and Austrian post-punk! Called *Die Tödliche Dosis*, it's that rare beast, the almost-all-killer comp. Danger Records recently brought some of the best sounds on it into the world in an affordable format in the form of the Plastix EP reviewed in these pages this month. Cool! Get it! And send me a copy of the comp while you're at it.

3) I had more comments on my Suburban Lawns shirt at the record fair than any other article of clothing I've worn in recent memory. My mate Ben printed it—get one along with all of your other bootleg punk fashion needs at outsideworldprint.com.



It was 1948. WWII was over. The leader of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the charismatic bon vivant Tito, had just split from Stalin and the Soviet Union, entering Yugoslavia into the newly formed Non-Aligned Movement. The country's trade depended heavily on the Soviet Bloc, and with Western politicians "keeping Tito afloat" in hopes of appeasing Yugoslavia into neutrality and weakening the Soviet Bloc, the country was immersed into an economic crisis. This was ideal ground for the introduction of a capitalist economy. What followed were two decades of "liberalization" in the '50s and '60s (less party involvement in the economic sphere) and a decrease in personal spending due to post-war displeasure, which was in turn met by heavy promotion of consumerism by the party. This led to an increase in spending, as Slovenian families shrunk to an average of 3.5 members per household. People were buying TVs, record players, washing machines, scooters, many traveling to Trieste, a neighboring Italian city popular for shopping.

An unplanned side effect of this gradual shift towards consumerism meant that, surprise surprise, people pushed aside collectivist social notions for more individualistic consumption-driven ones. As Gregor Tomc says in his enlightening chapter, "A Tale of Two Subcultures, A Comparative Analysis of Hippie and Punk Subcultures in Slovenia" from the book *Remembering Utopia: The Culture of Everyday Life in Socialist Yugoslavia*, "Nobody seemed to notice how the emphasis of socialism shifted from creating an alternative to capitalism to entering into a competition with it." This liberal economic change also brought about a rise in unemployment, which the party dealt with by opening the borders (the known Gastarbeiter), meaning lots of young people could travel abroad and be exposed to western culture and youth styles. The results of this increased familiarity with the west is what helped the radicalization of the youth movement, and the growth of the hippie and punk movements.

During the '50s the Yugoslav republic viewed jazz with suspicion, and it was even debated amongst top communist officials, saying that its "unhealthy outgrowths [...] have nothing in common either with music or with dance" even though "it can—with its modern expressive means—positively influence the mood of the working man, his cheerfulness." The only two recording studios were state-run and hard to get into without a record deal, which was contingent on a band's lyrics, which were subject to approval by the "Committee of Trash," which basically regulated lyrics and made sure they did not oppose the party. This made access to self-expressed ideas and independent cultural media more difficult. For example, Pankrti recorded their first double single in Italy and any band that did release records made in state-owned studios had to "adjust" their lyrics, giving the art of reading between the lines a new meaning in the context of anti-authoritarian lyrics.

What is something to remember, though, is that youth culture in Yugoslavia was developing under the following climate: it was a socialist society gradually experiencing the assimilation of capitalism, while still being under the watchful eye of the party gatekeepers, who were also having to learn how to react to, confine and/or control these new, "decadent," "imported" ideas from the west. This disapproval only made it all the more appealing, of course.

It is hard to imagine a life split in two the way it was for Yugoslavians: on the one hand a public life appropriate for state controlled activities ("class-integrated neighborhoods, party-controlled school system, state-run cultural industry") and on the other a private, "spontaneous" life not structured by or around the official state norms (playing in rock bands, joining a commune, or being active in political youth groups). The hippie subculture was an important part of youth culture in 1970s Slovenia, as was the subpolitical student movement, which in some cases resulted in students being more radicalized that the party elite, as expressed in a popular student slogan of the time, "Communism against 'communism.' " Western student movements were influential in this radicalization, leading Ljubljana University students to protest against dorm rent increases, the Vietnam war, Nixon's Yugoslav visit, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, Slovenian minority rights in Italy, and more. The student youth party was instrumental in the growth and dissemination of youth culture and so, when in the mid-'70s the state forced it to merge with the Alliance of Socialist Youth of Slovenia (ASYS), it left a sort of void which neither the hippie culture (which bored suburban youth) nor the socialist realism movement (the dominant one until then, a mix of traditional working class culture, Soviet Bloc art and western "progressive" ideas) seemed capable of filling. This was the ideal time for the party to strengthen its influence and, of course, for something new to flourish in the wake of reaction. Over the next couple years the punk movement grew tremendously, with more bands surfacing all around Slovenia: Pankrti (Bastards), Lublanska Psi (Ljubljana Dogs), Grupa 92 (Group 92), Berlinski Zid (Berlin Wall), KuZle (Bitches), U.B.R. (Uporniki Bez Razloga, Rebels Without A Cause), III Kategorija (Third Category)—and this just in Slovenia, not to mention the rest of the Yugoslav federation.

One of the things about punk, not only in Slovenia but anywhere where it flourished, is that its characteristics are not that of a subculture stemming from the mainstream. Instead, punk springs as a reaction, a counterculture. Of course this meant that, even if the societal background in Slovenia was not necessarily adverse to youth cultures (as Slovenia was one of the most developed states in the Yugoslav federation) the system, which was losing control over media during the '70s and '80s thanks to new media technologies, viewed them with suspicion, even confusion. So, once the party finally declared its disapproval of punk, this opened the way for increased suppression from the state police. A number of incidents occurred, but perhaps the most well-known was the "Nazi punk affair," when a populist newspaper wrongfully assumed three Ljubljana punks, who were sporting "Nazi punks fuck off" pins with swastikas crossed out, to be members of the Nazi party. This resulted in their arrest under the charges of secretly trying to start their own IV Reich (!). It was clear that punk was no longer considered just a symbolic threat.

The student movement, despite having merged with the Alliance of Socialist Youth of Slovenia (ASYS), was still a major contributing factor to the evolution of punk. The elderly party elite figured it no longer played a leading role in the political landscape and dialogue, since it was now under party regulation. However, they underestimated the student movement's power and, with the help of people like P. Mlakar (a poet, philosopher, artist, book editor and more), Igor Vidmar (a radio DJ, concert promoter, political activist and more) and other members of the student movement, they supported punk by playing punk bands on the radio, promoting their shows, publishing their comics and recording their records. If Marcuse's "repressive tolerance" is where capitalism and totalitarianism meet, then Slovene punks were having to balance the thin line between the two, stemming from the former and growing into the later. Such a system clash is ideal for the eruption of youth movements, especially one as vivid and forceful as punk. Much like when two tectonic plates collide and mountains are formed, Slovenian punk rose, growing past the police interrogations, the arrests, the censorship, even Tito's death. It would not be wrong to say that the punk movement in Yugoslavia helped society further open up to the concept of revolution, and this is perhaps where its strongest appeal lies: in the manifestation that, yes, punk can be more than just music, concerts and records; that, in fact, punk was and can still be a powerful force of social change. In his introduction to the Pekinska Patka interview for *MRR* four years ago, Spencer Rangitsch says that they "didn't just 'push the envelope' of what was deemed socially and politically acceptable, they also broke boundaries in radical ways which helped create new spaces and possibilities for a youth subculture to thrive." And that sounds pretty fucking punk to me.

These is much to be said about this very unique time and place, and my short introduction is by no means a comprehensive deposition of all the facts—one could fill books and books and still have more to say. This was, however, the most relevant information I found, in large thanks to the aforementioned paper by Gregor Tomc. There is probably less written about punk in Yugoslavia during the Yugoslav wars that followed Tito's death, but that is not to say that it did not exist. The idea behind this Ex-Yugo Special is to learn more about how and why punk erupted in Yugoslavia under socialism, and to shed more light onto how punk survives during and after wartime. Hopefully in the process we can broaden our horizon of punk history, helping us better frame our own perceptions of it. One of the most important characteristics of punk, for me, is the realization that, since we chose to create, and thus define the culture we engage in and the life we lead, then it is also up to us to preserve and document it. I am honored to be able to offer these pages to some of the unsung progressives of the first wave of punk and, in doing so, express my admiration for their contributions to it.

ENDNOTES:

• I have put together a shortlist of some of my favourite Slovenian punk songs. In no order: **O! Kult** "Za Ljudi" from their *Mladi Imajo Moc* EP, which translates to "For the People," declaring "freedom is a scam!" Some of the lyrics from this song adorn the back cover of the magazine this month. Quo Massacre "V Očeh" from their *Kje Je Odgovor!* LP. The title means "In the Eyes" a track that stuck with me the second I heard it, and which is a prime example of how, even if one cannot understand the lyrics, the music speaks volumes. **KuZle** "Vahid" from their *Archived* LP, which talks about a Serb boy being in love with a Slovenian girl, but her father disapproving of the relationship. **Pekinska Patka** "Bila je Tako Lijepa" from the *Bila Je Tako Lijepa/Buba – Rumba* 45. This song was made popular in 1965 in Yugoslavia by chanson singer Dragan Stojnic. The original, called "Elle Etait Si Jolie," was written in French by crooner Alain Barrière as the French entry for the 1963 Eurovision music contest. Splendidly better performed by punks, for sure. **Indust-Bag** "Ti Si Stroj" from their *Zavrzena Mladost* LP; the song title translates to "you are a machine," while their record title means rejected youth. **Grupa 92** "Od Šestih do Dveh" from their *Od Šestih do Dveh/Tujci* 45, this song is called "6 to 2" and the lyrics talk about the monotony of the work schedule. **U.B.R.** "U.B.R." from their split with Croatian band Patareni. A "no future" manifesto for rebels without a cause, clocking in at exactly one minute. **Tožibabe** "Dejuže" from their EP of the same name. They were the only known all-girl hardcore punk band in Slovenia at that time and this track is a phenomenal, unrepeatable classic. **Šund** "Komisija za Šund" from the epic *Lepo Je...* compilation. "Lepo je..." in Slovenian means "it is nice..." and the subtitle to this comp is "...V Naši Domovini Biti Mlad" (...in our country to be young) epitomizing the irony felt by punks under the socialist regime.

• My friend Jason and I were discussing a recent outdoor punk show ours friends organized in Athens, Greece with seminal HC band Chaotic End. That same night, Jason was in London watching Doom (yes, *the* Doom) play a reunion show. He said of the event: "In a city of 8 million, only 200 people attended the show; while in a country of 10 million, 4,000 people showed up. I think that's amazing!" I said, "I think one of the reasons is that, even if people attending aren't punks, they go because they want to support the common goal—you know, they share 'the struggle.' " To which Jason replied, "Or it could just be the beer."

• The Lowest Form killed it live!

• I'm finally visiting home for the first time in 31 months! lydia@maximumrocknroll.com

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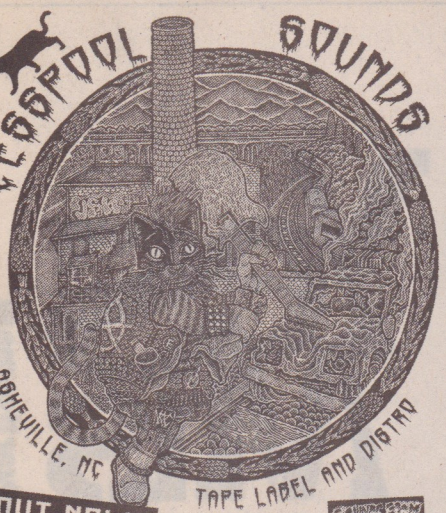

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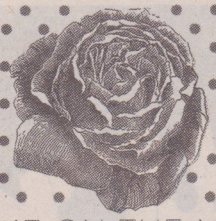

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nervous trend (perth)
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AUSTRALIAN SCENE REPORT

MID 2014

written by christina p.

Where do you draw the line in punk? At first it may seem that the Australian scene is quite small, but in fact, there are punk bands that bleed out into many underground scenes with their own brands of punk and punk-influenced music. Although there aren't many squats, warehouses, or house shows, there are a number of venues that accommodate punk music, with different ones filling different niches. People are friends and know each other so there's crossover in styles, which pulls more people to shows. Grind bands play with post-punk bands, thrash metallers with crusties, punks with rock'n'rollers. We support touring bands with places to stay and locals setting up shows, especially international bands that put the effort to sneak past customs to play here. This doesn't happen too often, though we will get one or more bands a year when we're lucky, so it's still more than expected. We know how expensive flights to Australia are and that there is an almost zero chance of breaking even on costs when touring here. The hardcore punk zines that came out in the early 2000s seem to have mostly died out, but there are still a few zines coming out in this era of technology. Ultimately, despite the distance between cities in Australia, we're an active hub full of punks keen on keeping up with what's going on, attending different shows, travelling interstate, and generally having a good time to some good punk music.

adelaide

Venues: There are a few pubs that can be booked for punk shows in Adelaide but only two DIY spaces. Mad Mouse Alley has recently reopened, but it is Animal House that has been helping local and international touring bands out with a show space and place to sleep for the last six years.

Record Labels and Stores: No Patience Records is run out of Animal House. They've put out releases from some of Australia's best punk bands of the last few years, many of which went on to cult notoriety in their respective niche, including the likes of TEARGAS, CHROME DOME, STRAIGHTJACKET NATION, LAKES, and SUFFER. Having recently spent the better part of the year organizing THEE NODES Australian Tour—which rattled the monotony Australian shows can sometimes fall into and, in my opinion, couldn't have gone any better—label boss Lewis is now back in Adelaide working on new releases like the new LAKES 7" and the repress of the FLESH WORLD demo on 7".

Lethal Dose is a label run by Lewis's bandmate from VAGINORS, Moose, which put out the INTERNAL ROT and MANHUNT split 7" earlier this year, a sure-to-be timeless Australian grind and hardcore release. On top of the label and his bands, Moose has also opened up Blast Furnace Studios, a recording studio and rehearsal space that he runs with his partner.

Major Crimes is run by members of RULE OF THIRDS and DANNY WHITTEN'S VEINS, and releases Adelaide bands as well as Brisbane's death-by-synth duo MULTIPLE MAN. The label encompasses these several distinctive sounds in the punk scene.

Porthole Records and Clarity Records are good record stores to check out for old or local punk.

Bands: Just as VAGINORS was born out of the ashes of BLOODCLOT FAGGOTS (and that band out of SNAKE RUN), BOTOX, a new dark electronic project from Lewis of No Patience, began as VAGINORS took a backseat in the

lives of its members. After returning from their US tour last year, VAGINORS' guitarist Moose started to focus on his more straight-down-the-line hardcore bands STARVATION and THE WEIGHT, as well as his label. Elliott, better known as VAGINORS's Boy Toy, plays in DANNY WHITTEN'S VEINS. It's not surprising to see him in another band, as over the years I've picked up a number of tapes by different projects he's started. WET CLOTH is one such project—they play amazingly shitty snot punk by naïve and obnoxious teenagers. This tape disappeared as quickly as it popped up. The only one of Boy Toy's bands that has lasted and is gaining some momentum is SIMFUCKERS. The demo came out on his own frivolous label Cosmic Autistic Records, which died before anyone realized it was around.

teargas
photo: lee stefen

Goth/post-punk band RULE OF THIRDS is going strong, the main project of Celeste and Ben. Celeste is also involved in Adelaide's art scene as a visual artist and band photographer. Ben runs Major Crimes Records, which also released HYDROMEDUSA, who opened the door to reviving the classic Australian rock sound today. There are a few other bands in the Australian punk scene doing the same, such as Melbourne's POWER and Brisbane's BLACK DEITY.

There are also a few other bands or entities that are associated with the scene but move outside of the core of it. Post-punk band NO ACTION has an LP in the works but has retreated from the stage, playing only one show in the last six months. ANIMAL TRAPS has gone down a dark/post-punk path but sound more palatable for a wider audience. BRUFF SUPERIOR has taken on "dolewave," a contemporary Australian take on the New Zealand Flying Nun sound but a lot dreamier.

Zines: Until recently, SIMFUCKERS guitarist Richard wrote an educated yet nihilistic hardcore fanzine up called *Inverted Forest*. It didn't gain the momentum or praise it deserved outside of the Australian cult. Inverted Forest is the only steady fanzine that has come out of Adelaide in the last few years. He's recently ditched that project and started a new one called, the first issue being a split with *Down and Out* zine from Tasmania. Other occasional Adelaide zines include one Elliot (also of SIMFUCKERS) did when he was just getting into the scene that reviewed music by judging bands by how much he would jerk off to them.

DNA, Australia's longest running punk music fanzine, first published in 1979, is also based here. Stuffed full of facts, it is one of the best points of reference for Australian punk from its beginning to present. Unfortunately, I can't read it; with no layout or visual appeal at all it comes across as really boring (but informative nonetheless).

Record Label, Distros, and Stores: Endless Blockade's label and distro seems to finally have come to an end after slowing down in the late 2000s after the DEATHCAGE *From Despair to Where* 7" came out in 2008. As far as I can tell this was their last release. While active, this label put out crust bangers from the likes of INSURGENTS, PISSCHRIST, DRAFT DODGER, and SCHIFOSI, all now put to rest.

Nuclear Blood is primarily a distro that is lugged around to shows, stocking local and international raw punk records; they also put out all of the Last Chaos releases. Their split 7" with VAARALLINEN—co-released with Hardcore Victim—is one of the best split 7"s out of Australia in 2013.

Nailgun Murder Records, which went from being a distro to putting out its own releases. His first release is spazz'n'roll punks WOODBOOT's demo tape.

Bedroom Suck Records has been involved in releasing a few

brisbane

classic "punk" records of sorts. This label has an Australian indie rock sound that has gained notoriety both in Australia and overseas to larger and trendier audiences. Still, there are some bands worth checking out on this label including LOWER PLENTY, BLANK REALM, LOOSE GRIP, and SLUG GUTS, as well as side projects of other more well known bands.

Negative Guest List ceased when its creator Brendon Annesley passed away in early 2011. Still, I still want to mention the releases on this label to highlight the gap left in Brisbane punk after Brendon was gone. His first release was a comp CD that went with the eponymous zine he wrote at the time. Putting out other comps along the way, he also released his own band WHITE COP as well as bands that matched his ugly notion of dirgy Australian punk including HATEFUCK, LOW LIFE, MEAT THUMP, DEGREASER, and more.

Eternal Soundcheck started out documenting punk shows on film and uploading the footage online for everyone to check out. After a few years, it branched out into a small distro.

last chaos
photo: lee stefen

Matt Kennedy—the mind behind KITCHEN'S FLOOR and one of my favorite Australian LPs of 2009—has turned his sights toward a record label. On top of all this he does a weekly community radio show on ZZZZ called *Underground Australiana*. Tune in to keep on top of Australian post-punk.

Tenth Court is a new label that has been releasing an evolving wave of "beautiful scumbag talent"—dreary heavy sludgy noise pop, to use a bunch of all-encompassing descriptive words. Some releases include the MARTYR PRIVATES /

THIGH MASTER split tape and the YOGHURT BLOOD *Collected Works 2009-2013* tape.

As in other states, there is a record store or two worth checking out, but these stores hardly have any impact on the scene. Most punk subgenres in each state have a label and distro central to the scene that people and bands revolve around instead.

putkah
photo: bad // teeth

Bands: Recently joining the punk grave is one of Australia's favorite and longest running raw lords TEARGAS. They called it quits at the beginning of 2014 after raining good shows on Brisbane, Australia, and the world for the last ten years. Their last tour was with HC legends FORWARD from Japan. This tour was organized by Hardcore Victim Records, which also put out a Forward / Teargas split EP for the big event. I saw their show in Melbourne and it was an emotional one; the energy was insane and their set slayed.

As Teargas came to a close, the members turned to newer projects. Geordie plays guitar in long-running project GOLDEN BATS, one of the very few sludgy doom bands in Australia. BLACK DEITY plays in a similar style, another of the few Australian bands in the punk scene playing doomy stoner rock'n'roll. HEROIN SS is recording again after a short hiatus. Before this break they released a few demos and a 7". Members of that band have started the D-beat band KRIGDODA, who should have a demo tape out soon.

Will from Teargas books shows and now plays in LAST CHAOS. Their bassist Murdock also does punk art for the local and national scenes. He recently did the Total Attack logo for 2014 and cover art for Last Chaos.

unpeople
photo: glan schenau

OCCULTS gained a bit of momentum as a dark post-punk band, releasing their 7" on No Patience when the genre seemed to temporarily boom in Australia. This boom included similar new bands like MASSES (Melbourne), RULE OF THIRDS (Adelaide), and others. From playing shows in Brisbane, OCCULTS found allies in MULTIPLE MAN, a band comprised of twins on synths who are inspired by acts like Gary Numen and Cabaret Voltaire. After a few 7"s and tapes they have their first 12" out soon on No Patience and Burka (Spain).

Sam from OCCULTS and Sean from MULTIPLE MAN soon came together with members of LAST CHAOS, TVSTD, and more to start an apocalyptic raw punk six-piece band called UNPEOPLE. Their demo is out now on Melbourne's Blow Blood Records. The guitarist from SICK PEOPLE also plays guitar in a grind band called COFFIN BIRTH.

Although technically in New South Wales, Byron Bay is close to Brisbane so bands from there often travel to the bigger city for shows. SHACKLES put Byron Bay on the map, playing great Australian powerviolence-fused HC. They are now the leading band of this sound in Australia, as EXTORTION has slowed down to the point of dormancy. A few months ago, they released an LP and will soon start writing again for future releases. Mark from Shackles is also planning on doing more with his label, Castigated. Their next release will be SHITGRINGER.

MIGRAINE, a new band from the area, recently released a demo on Asbestos Death Records from Perth. Other new bands from Byron Bay include BRAIN TRAUMA and COMMON ENEMY. Hardcore powerviolence band MANHUNT often played shows with Shackles. They are, however, currently on hiatus after releasing a 7" and split 7" with Melbourne's INTERNAL ROT. Before their break, they toured nationally

multiple man / photo: glan schenau

with STARVATION and also supported RINGWORM when they came down under. Alix has now moved to Adelaide and is running Lethal Dose Records with her partner Moose (see Adelaide section). Lena, who was also in MANHUNT, restarted her zine distro, Do it Together.

A newer band with a coldwave sound is PLEASURE SYMBOLS, which features Phoebe Paradise (another Brisbane artist) and Jasmine from OCCULTS. Shedstock Fest 2014 is a good reference for bands on the bleaker side of Brisbane post punk and synthwave, mixing MULTIPLE MAN with DEAD SHRED or BLANK REALM with SEWERS.

Also check out CRUEL MACHINE, SHIRTLIFTERS, RIPPED OFF, and ZODIAC.

Zines and Radio: In the few short years during which Brendon Annesley spat his filth on Australia, he left a one-of-a-kind impression through a unique brand of unfiltered, raw-to-the-bone Australian punk. He churned out over thirty issues of his *Negative Guest List* in about two years. Since he died, there have been no punk zines at all from Brisbane, or any from Australia that match his knowledgeable writing.

Fests: Total Attack is Australia's best hardcore, punk, and raw punk festival with an all-Australian line up (bar one or

two headliners that might be dragged in). Jane is one of the organizers and although her band VISCID has just broken up; she is in a new band called TVSTD. Queensland seems to dominate in punk art, as Jane has just drawn up a gory mess of a T-shirt design for SICK PEOPLE. Speaking of which, those straight up hardcore punks have been praised as a solid band to watch in the scene from none other than Teargas old dog, Neil Bramley. Sam McKenzie has done the art for the upcoming SICK PEOPLE 7", which you should look out for. Sam draws on commission to pay the bills, but has also started doing a lot more punk art the last year. This includes art for his own bands—WOODBLOOT, OCCULTS, and UNPEOPLE—and others like SICK PEOPLE locally and NOBUNNY abroad.

melbourne

Venues: Living in the music capital of Australia, Melbournians are well and truly spoiled for choice. There are always shows happening, so many so that it's easy to be picky and get lazy about going out since the scene'll be there whether you go or not. This is not a luxury all Australian cities enjoy.

There have been a few short-lived DIY spaces in Melbourne over the last ten years that haven't lasted long (Nat's Warehouse, Irene's Warehouse, Batman Park, Loophole, etcetera). The only current DIY venues are the Essendon Squat and Black Goat on the northside, both going strong for a few years now. The Gaso was good while it lasted, surviving around three years as an all-encompassing punk pub until it shut down last year. Along with the Bendigo Hotel, these venues housed most shows in the genres of raw punk, crust, and hardcore. Occasionally, a band or two in these styles would get put on the bill for a show on the westside, which hosts most street punk shows these days. These street punk bands—unlike most other punk bands—have almost no association whatsoever with the rest of the Melbourne punk scene. Street punk is definitely on its own and seemingly gets the most commercial media attention. Unfortunately, it also produces the most boring music.

gentlemen
photo: glan schenau

Record Labels, Distros, and Stores: Yeap, who is known for his bands PISSCHRIST and KRÖMOSOM, runs the Hardcore Victim label and puts out mostly local raw punk music. This includes his own bands KRÖMOSOM and BLOODY HAMMER, as well as HÄVITTÄJÄT, UNKNOWN TO GOD, NUCLEAR SEX ADDICT, LAST CHAOS, and TEARGAS. Soon Hardcore Victim will release a SCAB EATER 7" as a split label release with Blow Blood. The SCAB EATER demo tape was, in my opinion, one of the best Australian demos of 2013. If you ever get a chance to see them live, take it. They're angry, honest, and full of raw energy. They just finished a two-month tour of Southeast Asia.

Initially influenced by older Australian hardcore bands like STRAIGHTJACKET NATION and the exciting current hardcore sound in NYC, Cool Death Records has found a niche in reviving the Australian 1970s pub rock'n'roll sound. They first emerged in 2012, creating a scene and sound of their own, gaining notoriety abroad, and inspiring bands locally and interstate. Under the Cool Death banner you'll find DRIBBLE, with a live tape and demo, LEATHER LICKERS, GUTTER GODS demo tape and LP, VELVET WHIP demo tape, and POWER cassingle.

scab eater
photo: christina p.

Cool Death is also helping to organize Maggot Fest, a Melbourne underground punk fest featuring all of Australia's best punk, garage, and hardcore bands. Sometimes there's an international headliner but unfortunately not this year.

Blow Blood label started mid 2013 with the release of the EEL *Live in Cleveland* tape (EEL is from Pittsburgh, US). Since then, it has been all local releases with the MASSES 7", SUBSTANCE ABUSE demo tape, UNPEOPLE demo tape, and the upcoming SCAB EATER 7" with Hardcore Victim. This label also does *Stitches in My Head*, a fanzine that has run for about the last four years covering both local and international music.

James does Unwound Records, which features younger punks from the southside of town. He has put out releases by IDLE MINDS, HALT EVER, THE WORLD AT A GLANCE, and DIPLOID. DIPLOID and WORLD AT A GLANCE are screamo hardcore with some post-punk influences. Scott from DIPLOID just released the first issue of *Homo Gestalt* zine, with the second issue already on the way.

Twin brothers Robert and Michael run Life.Lair.Regrets Records, an all ages straightedge hardcore label and distro. Together they organize a lot of good shows and bring over international acts for tour. They're really active and efficient, and encourage others to get involved and support the scene. Check out some of their releases: MAN HUNT, FROZEN OVER, IMPACT ZONE, IRON MIND, LIFE'S FATE, STARVATION, NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT, and more.

Homeless Records is "dedicated to releasing only the finest garage, punk, trash r'n'r, scuzz" and came to my attention by releasing the first CUNTZ LP. Their first release was the BITS OF SHIT *Cut Sleeves* LP in 2010. These forty-something punks played obnoxious teenage punk and went hooning around the states in 2012. From there, Homeless has put out releases of other locals like the STABS, GENTLEMEN, and SEWERS.

Also promoting this sound is Aarght! Records. They recently did another chiller month of Sunday arvo [afternoon] post-punk

and garage shows at the Copacabana. Starting in 2007, Aarght! now has a decent number of Australian post-punk releases under their belt, including OOGA BOOGAS, TOTAL CONTROL, UV RACE, CUT SICK, EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESION RING, AUSMUTEANTS, and NUN.

Going further down this path leads to older punks—maybe better described as "music connoisseurs"—focusing on releasing diverse international rock'n'roll records. There's Lexicon Devil Records, older Australian rock'n'roll music like Aztec Records, and a mix of both from Shortfuse Records. Shortfuse put out the second and latest STRAIGHTJACKET NATION LP (which is now six years old, can you believe it?).

Vacant Valley finds allies in Australian labels like Eternal Soundcheck, Bedroom Suck, and Rough Skies, all of which feature bands playing post-punk, lo-fi, ambient noise, and other underground pop varieties. Their discography includes releases from POP SINGLES, PSY ANTS, CURED PINK, and PUR PURPOSE.

Nihilistic Orbs created a dregs-of-humanity synth scene with Shaun's own band CHROME DOME. Branching out from there, they released sounds of depressed dance-trance, synth pop, minimalist beats in the vein of Kraftwerk, and so forth. Their first release was the JONNY TELAPHONE "Ceremony/ The End" 7" in 2011. This was followed by an ASPS tape, the Chrome Dome *Cut Ties* 7", and other synth/goth glam/ post punk acts from around Australia like REPAIRS, SKY NEEDLE, FORCES, WHITE HEX, and NUN. With the decline of Nihilistic Orbs, It Records came in while displaying a calmer and more polished synth sound that ultimately took the punk out of this initial synth scene.

Melbourne has a number of good record stores worth searching for the old, obscure, non-punk, and rare—seriously, don't even bother if you're not Australian, it's too expensive comparatively—but if you're looking for current punk music you might as well go straight to the local label or distro.

masses
photo: lee stefen

Bands: Matt, who fronted KRÖMOSOM in the early days, moved on to sing in Finnish-styled punk band HÄVITTÄJÄT. After their demo release, their guitarist Ryan started singing in a side project called RIP FUCKER, which recently put out a tape and has a 7" coming out on Hardcore Victim. They play noisy hardcore with crust influences. Other members also played in PATHETIC HUMAN, which broke up a few years ago but was an amazing, one-of-a-kind powerviolence band on the hardcore punk side. There is also the dark post/peace punk band MASSES, which toured Australia earlier this year after the release of a 7" (a split release from Blow Blood and Rust and Machine in Seattle), as well as powerviolence band SPLIT TEETH.

DEBACLE is one of the older crust bands in town. New ones coming through include ANSIA, GRAVEYARD ORBIT, ASBESTOSISIS, TACTICAL ATTACK, and PUTKAH. SEWERCIDE plays often with these bands and is the only thrash metal band doing so, with other such bands playing either in the metal or street punk scenes. They thrash hard whether playing to 5 or 500 people, no matter who the audience is. They will be

scab eater
photo: lee stefen

supporting the Black Jesus CD launch later this year, along with PISSBOLT and Australia's favorite hardcore / lad fusion band RORT, who recently had their LP launch at the Bendigo. This show also included Australia's favorite grind band INTERNAL ROT, who was fresh off their U.S. tour, as well as Boston-styled hardcore bands THORNS, VICIOUS CYCLE, and BLOOD RULE. Another launch show was for WHITEHORSE, supported by DEAD, HEADLESS DEATH, and PISSBOLT. HEADLESS DEATH has Fil from RORT on vocals, Lachie from VELVET WHIP, and Christoph from INTERNAL ROT.

Christoph drums in about six bands. This is one reason why Melbourne has one of the biggest grind scenes in the world. Other killer grind bands are SUPER FUN HAPPY SLIDE and the KILL. There is also the Blastasfuk Grindcore label and distro. Christoph's mostly-grind bands can be seen blending into but breaking up line-ups of punk, post-punk, synth, and hardcore. Apart from the bands of his I've already mentioned, there is also UNNATURAL BIRTH, who is about to drop a demo, DOUBLED OVER who reformed (and then broke up again) to do a split 7" with U.S. band HEMDALE, and PREGNANCY, whose demo is being repressed on 7" and who also have an LP in the works. Christoph also joined CONTAMINATED, as TRENCH SISTERS have broken up (after a few "last shows"). Rohan from EXTORTION was also in this band. So was Erle, who also plays in a highly recommended stadium crust band called EXTINCT EXIST.

EXTORTION hasn't put out a release or played a show in the last two years, but as they approach the ten-year mark, they are set to awaken with an about-to-be-recorded LP and hopefully some shows to promote it.

Daniel—aka DX—still plays in STRAIGHTJACKET NATION, a band now going for ten years strong and a guaranteed killer live show. Finally writing music again, they put out a tape with a few sample tracks of things to come when they flew up the coast for Total Attack this year. Keep your ears peeled for a new LP. DX also drums in UV RACE, who just came back from touring Europe, and sings in TOTAL CONTROL, rumored to be going on indefinite hiatus. STRAIGHTJACKET NATION bassist Al, who is also in UV Race and Total Control, is also in a few other bands—namely DICK DIVER and EASTLINK—that

lean more towards the contemporary happy-go-lucky Australian post-punk sound.

WHITE WALLS comes from this side of town and has gained a bit of a following northside, getting their debut LP released by Poison City Records. (The music and records out on this label can easily be grouped as punk and hardcore for upper middle class people; they're more trendy and clean cut.) HALT EVER seemed to take influence from this fuzzed out lo-fi post punk sound.

Zines: *Bad // Teeth*, a photo fanzine, has documented a lot of these bands by featuring mostly live shots but also some of different landscapes and icons seen while travelling. The long time running *Distort* fanzine has definitely changed style a lot since its start at issue #7, going from punk cult to more cult weirdo rock'n'roll, underground music and literature.

A group of women who are behind *Teenage Fantasies*, a new power pop zine with a recently released first issue that comes with a mix tape.

perth

Record Labels, Distros, and Stores: I'm sure that Perth has record stores, but none that people looking for current punk music would go to. The biggest distro, Helta Skelta, has only gained momentum in the last year or so with the slow decline of other local labels like Coffin Cut Record, but should be your first point of reference if you're looking to buy or sell records in Perth. Helta Skelta is named after HELTA SKELTA, a Perth punk band that Kyle joined a year or so after the band formed; when he joined he started the label. Most of his releases have been from Perth, including all of the HELTA SKELTA (the band) releases. Keep an eye out for their next LP, out later in the year.

Other Helta Skelta releases include new powerviolence band PEOPLE PROBLEM, who just put on some killer shows in Melbourne, as well as Kyle's other band PLASTIC BAGS. There is also AGITATED, whose split 7" with LEECHES just

people problem / photo: kelly leech

dropped, with plans for an LP this year also. Helta Skelta's new releases are starting to move outside of Perth with the just-released Pathetic Human 7" and upcoming RATSAK and RED RED KROVVY 7". Jon, who sings in HELTA SKELTA, has also recently started his own label and distro Space Ritual. It has yet to release anything but he is slowly getting stuff together. Keep an eye out for his first release, a LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS LP! Jon also fronts PRAG, who just repressed a demo tape on 7". They're worth checking out if you like similar styled friends from other states like SIMFUCKERS and OILY BOYS.

Asbestos Death is a new label focusing on the heavier side of hardcore including the SUFFER discography, MIGRAINE (from Canberra) demo tape, CAGED GRAVE, and HEXX.

oily boys
photo: christina p.

Bands: Standing alone on the west coast are sludge doom lords DROWNING HORSE, who have a new LP in the mix, a slow work in progress. They travelled east in late 2012 to promote their last LP so hopefully this release brings them back.

NERVOUS TREND has just returned from a European tour. Amazingly, they did this tour on the back of their first demo after being asked to play a few fests abroad. They were a bit late to the dark post-punk trend, but based on the success of their tour they seem to have benefitted the most from it.

WARTHREAT has just released a 7" split with SEX DWARF from Sweden on Crucificados Pelo Sistema Records. This label also released a split 7" for Perth's HOLY MEASURE (formerly known FLESH POLICE) with SPLIT TEETH from Melbourne. Shane from Warthreat also ran the now defunct Live Fast Die Drunk crust label and distro.

Also worth checking out: EMU XPERTS, KITCHEN PEOPLE, NO SURVIVORS, VITAL SIGNS, and GRANDMOTHER.

Zines: Alex from NERVOUS TREND writes *Jerk Store*, Perth's only consistent zine. *Jerk Store* is contemporary underground clean (pop) punk oriented. He also runs a small label and distro that shares the zine's name.

sydney

Record Labels, Distros, and Stores: Sydney is different from the other Australian states for a few reasons. One difference is that the punk scenes there seem to revolve around two record stores—Repressed and Blackwire.

Nick who runs RIP Society works at Repressed Records. The label recently celebrated its fifth birthday, and has taken off since its initial formation. RIP Society has around 25 releases under its belt and counting, including some absolute winners in my book like the ROYAL HEADACHE 7" and LP, KITCHEN'S FLOOR 7" and *Loneliness is A Dirty Mattress* 12", HOUSEWIVES 7", and ZOND LP. Starting out by releasing bands with noisy, eerie, lo-fi punk sounds, RIP Society's aesthetic and sound has slowly refined to the dreamy indie post-punk played by BOOMGATES, WOOLEN KITS, BITCH PREFECT, and Nick's own BED

WETTIN' BAD BOYS. Their most recent releases by LOW LIFE and MOB, however, take the label completely back to its Sydney deadbeat band roots. I haven't heard the MOB LP yet but have heard nothing but good reviews. The LOW LIFE LP will end up in my top five for the year. It's ugly, dreary, and drone-y music played by lowlifes, basically.

Blackwire Records is an artist and volunteer run not-for-profit record shop and label that also hosts in-store shows. It is welcoming to different punk styles although mostly raw punk, hardcore, and punk is played there. Check out local DIY label Lacklustre Records as well.

Sydney is unique in Australian punk for reasons other than its record stores. Unlike other countries, Australia's LGBT community is almost completely separate from the punk scene. (This is not for any negative reasons, as I remember a time in Melbourne years ago when they seemed closely linked. Not so much these days.) Of all Australian cities, however, Sydney has the most overlap in these scenes.

low life
photo: christina p.

One Brick Today Records is run by Tara Jayne, whose main objective is "Supporting and helping provide visibility for women & queer folk who are marginalised in a largely straight/ male scene." They have put out the SHIT WEATHER/ HIRS split 7", MANHUNT *Human Detritus* 7", CIRCUITS demo, and more. Get a copy of the CANINE / DIPLOID split 7" when it comes out soon!

Two hours out from Sydney in Newcastle, Good Times Records has been releasing fastcore and powerviolence since 2006. Also check out Newcastle locals AMATEUR DRUNKS and HACKED TO CHUNKS.

Bands: OILY BOYS likes to travel to Melbourne to play with their musical comrades in the Cool Death scene. They put out a limited 7" in late 2013 that disappeared immediately; it was their first release since the 2012 demo tape.

After slowing down to the point of having everyone think they were breaking up, ROYAL HEADACHE is playing a show for the first time in a year at the upcoming Maggotfest. People are still waiting on the second LP but there is no news as to when it will be out.

UNKNOWN TO GOD is touring Australia in August, supporting DEATHRAID. Japanese-styled hardcore rampagers DEATHCAGE have been quiet lately, as Spider has started a new band called NOBODYS DRIVING.

MANDATE, THORAX, PALMER GRASP, ACH, ETHER RAG, and DARK HORSE all play shows in the queer scene. Queercore punk band GLORY HOLE has just finished a European tour. For more information on this scene, contact some Sydney-siders like One Brick Today Records or Blackwire.

The Australian Capital Territory is a little state inside the state of New South Wales; its major city is called Canberra. I travelled there once, saw a few bands, and stayed with a top guy who got "Thee Nodes" face tattooed on his butt while he was drunk. HYGIENE supported Thee Nodes— they are a hardcore band worth keeping an eye on. They will have a 7" out soon on ROTP Records.

Other bands in and around the Canberra scene are EYE GOUGE, I EXIST, BLIGHT WORMS, TAKE CONTROL, and TV COLOURS. There is also THROAT OF DIRT on the heavier side and WIVES and MIND BLANKS on the lighter side.

tasmania

Even though Tasmania is only an hour's flight from Melbourne, I am in the dark about what goes on there so I enlisted local busybody Julian Teakle to shed some light on the underground music hidden on this small and mysterious island.

Record Labels, Distros, and Stores: Julian runs Rough Skies Records, which mostly puts out compilations of Tasmanian noise and experimental music. According to the Rough Skies bandcamp, "Hobart and Tasmania in general has had for a number of years an active community of experimental musicians and sound artists, performing in small venues and DIY events... The curators and compilers of this collection are looking to spread the word and expose the artists beyond the Hobart music/arts scene." These *Community* releases were released in small runs and are no longer available for purchase, but all the songs are on the Rough Skies bandcamp for your listening pleasure. Julian has also archived Tasmanian music of the '90s at goulburnstreet.tumblr.com for those wanting to look back further than the contemporary scene.

Wrong Place Records is based in Hobart, Tasmania's capital city, and has a few releases out. They cover sounds "ranging from synth pop, folk, twee, post punk, dolegaze, and whatever you want to call it."

Ben Crothers does Consumer Productions, a label that has been running since the mid-1990s, but has slowed down a bit now. Releases range from Tasmanian locals to bands on the mainland, but all more obscure / loner post-punk etc.

Number One Hits is a label that also puts out compilations of Tasmanian music but releases them online only.

On the heavier side, Tasmania also has a thriving metal and grind scene supported by Heavy Chains Records. They

just released a demo by OUTCAST, a Melbourne metal band that will probably never play live but will echo around underground cult metal circles. Other releases on this metal label include BARROW WIGHT, TAROT, IRON HAWN, and THE WIZAR'D. Also check out Hobart grindcore band NOWYOUREFUCKD.

Wormwood Grasshopper Records is run by Ben from DRUNK ELK. It is also a distro. His releases include MAD NANNA (from Melbourne), HAMMERING THE CRAMPS, and GARBAGE AND THE FLOWERS. Drunk Elk has just put out a new LP and has played shows to launch it in Sydney and Melbourne.

Bands: Julian's band the NATIVE CATS is one of Tasmania's bigger exports to the mainland and beyond. Self-proclaimed "electronic pub rock" (an accurate description!), their third and latest album came out at the end of last year on RIP Society.

MO1O (Machines of 1nditerm1nate Origin) is a two-piece band comprised of music veterans from the Tasmanian metal and noise scenes. NAKED started as a one-man project but then grew into a full band to perform the songs live. Other bands in Tasmania include ALL THE WEATHER, DOG TOWER, BI HOUR, and MESS O'REDS.

Zines: One of Australia's longest running fanzines comes from Tasmania, *Down and Out*. This fanzine covers both local and international dark punk, hardcore, and metal. Currently at issue 31, copies are easier to find in the US than Australia.

crowd photo: kelly leech

All right!! You made it to the end! If Australian punk sounds interesting and you want to know more, all you have to do is come here and check it out for yourself. Go for a drive, try not to hit a kangaroo—I've hit two so far driving between cities, it's pretty upsetting!—buy an over-priced six-pack and look down the alleyway next to the venue at the show. Chances are all the punks will be down there drinking because it's way cheaper than drinking at the bar. That's probably the best place to make friends.

This scene report definitely hasn't covered every band, label, or zine that is due for a mention. Australia has a constantly growing, changing, and evolving scene. I recommend checking out a local underground music book Noise In My Head: Voices From The Ugly Australian Underground. *It was released this year after five years in the making, and focuses on a broad range of Australian underground rock music from the last ten or so years. Researching those mentioned above will bring you to the unmentioned, bringing them together into a larger Australian punk scene. Thanks to everyone that provided me with information. All photographers: Kelly Leech,* Bad // Teeth, *Lee Stefen, Glan Schenau. Special thanks to Jane from TVSTD and Mark from Shackles for their help with the Brisbane section, Jon from Space Ritual and Kyle from Helta Skelta for the Perth Section, Julian Teakle for information on the Tasmanian underground music scene, and Boy Toy in Adelaide. Thanks also to Jeppe and Nellie for proofing the report. If you want to know more or want further contacts, feel free to email me at stitchesinmyheadfanzine@gmail.com.*

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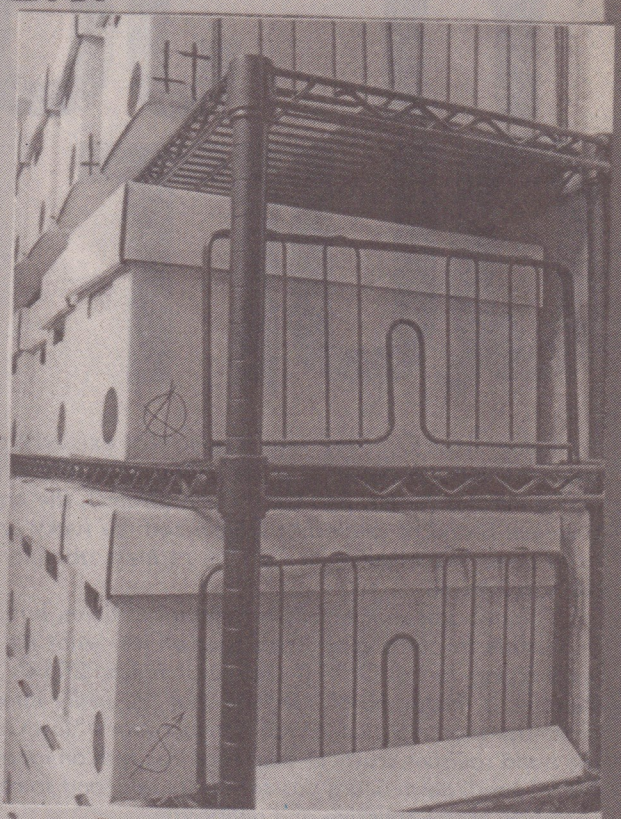

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YI JUST QUIT PUNK

Yi, hailing from Oakland, was a band that existed from 2010 until this year. A power trio consisting of Jackson Blumgart David Perales (bass), and Chris Denn (drums), the band made a unique brand of punk that synthesized the funky proficiency of a band like Minutemen with the reckless abandon of raw, KBD-style punk.

Yi's music was shamelessly referential at times, but it still felt impossible to put a confident finger on just what the hell they were trying to do. One of their best songs, 2014's "Freeze," features a thrash metal interlude that comically interrupts an otherwise subdued punk march. On last year's "Just Quit Punk," the band squishes crusty D-beat together with an ignorant '90s NYHC breakdown and a ska-core bass solo, and somehow it all somehow seems cohesive and deliberate.

Earlier this year, they self-released their debut LP, Crying, after four agile years as a band that produced two tapes, two 7"s, an array of Bay Area gigs, and two trips out east. Their sloppy, lighthearted and fiercely DIY aesthetic extended to their record packaging; one came wrapped in newspaper, the others were in white sleeves with a misaligned rectangular sticker slapped on the front.

I interviewed Yi with help from Talya Cooper (of In School, Household) after they played at Brooklyn's Silent Barn in April. The interview touches upon their difficulties in finding genre and contemporaries, the perpetual specter of Primus in their music, and other generalities regarding the band. They played their last show in August in San Francisco. Questions by Nathan Albert and Talya Cooper, introduction by Nathan Albert. Photos courtesy of the band.

C: What's it like being a band from Oakland? Do you identify with any bands from the scene there?
Jackson Blumgart: It's cool. We like Street Eaters, Yogurt Brain.
David Perales: Uzi Rash, which isn't a band anymore. A lot of the bands we identify with have broken up already, they couldn't take it.

MRR: Is there a noticeable difference between bands from Oakland and bands from San Francisco and the rest of the bay?
David: Yeah, Oakland's better.
Jackson: San Francisco has a hard time with DIY spaces, so there's not really anywhere for a scene to incubate. It seems very disparate. In Oakland, it's very united, and there's a strong house scene.

MRR: Someone I know compared Yi to Primus... is that a compliment or a dis?
Jackson: That's cool. I think it's more of a spiritual comparison. They're a freewheeling trio and they didn't care... I don't know, that's weird to compare us to Primus.

MRR: I think it's the bass... a powerful slap?!
Jackson: Yeah. The first time I ever saw David was in jazz band in high school. He was a trumpet player and he came over to the guitars and basses, and he played "My Name is Mud" on bass, I think. And I thought, "Aw, this dude is hella cool, I wanna be in a band with him," and then, eight or nine years later we were finally in a band. So Primus has always been there.

MRR: How did Yi meet?
Jackson: We all went to high school in Oakland together.

MRR: Where? Shout out your high school!
Jackson: Skyline High School.
David: Tom Hanks, Gary Payton. Tom Hanks, dude.
Jackson: They just went to school with me and they were in bands and I was in bands.

MRR: But it's taken so long until you became Yi!
David: When Tom Hanks came to the school, he was like, "come on, get it together you guys!" And the next day I get a call from Jackson.

MRR: On the topic of that eight or nine year hole between meeting and starting Yi, what kinds of bands have you been in? I know Jackson has been in a bunch of bands, like random emo bands?
David: [To Jackson] You were in a ska band in middle school right?
Jackson: I was in a ska band?
David: I was in a ska-punk band.
Jackson: Any kind of uncool music you can think of, I was probably in that band at some point.
David: I was in the Morning Benders a long time ago. Jackson used to be in Quest for Quintana Roo, and that is still one of my favorite bands.

MRR: What did they sound like?
David: He says "punk" so I'm gonna go with punk. Everyone used to say they were screamo, and he didn't like that one, so I'm gonna go with "punk."

MRR: Yeah, Jackson is hella prolific. He may not know it but he's an icon of the Bay Area scene.
Jackson: Is that right?

MRR: I think so. From an armchair perspective, being on a computer in New York.
David: Yeah, he called me up one day to join Yi, and you can imagine how stoked I was.

MRR: Do you mind talking about my two favorite songs on *Crying*? "The Bus" and "Freeze"?
Jackson: "The Bus" is about people complaining about the Google Bus. We had the riff to "Freeze" for a while. "Freeze" is about how your hair just never stops growing. And sometimes you just look at yourself and you're like, "I look like how I feel I should look like," and then the next day your hair keeps going, and you can never stop it.

MRR: You have a good haircut right now; who did you get the haircut from?
Jackson: Me, I did it.

MRR: You cut your own hair? That's cool. When I was about to turn 20, and I was like, "Fuck, I'm about to lose my teenage years," I went into the bathroom at my parents' house, and took a mustache trimmer and just started stabbing at my hair blindly. I gave myself a similar haircut to what you have [laughs]. Except I have curly-ass hair. Y'all are technically a sick band, did you grow up playing metal?
Chris Denn: I would just go to my friends' parents' houses, who also played drums, and they'd ask if I wanted to trade fours with them, and then they'd do four, and I'd just go home feeling like shit without having done anything.

MRR: What is "trading fours?"
Chris: Oh, like they'd do four bars and I'll do four bars.
Jackson: Like the Chad Smith/Will Ferrell drum-off?
David: Yeah, exactly like that, it's a classic drum-off.
Chris: And they'd just do four, and I was like "That was great, I'm gonna go now." And that's how I learned. We were also in jazz band.

MRR: What about you, David?
David: Well, I didn't go to prom. So I stayed inside and ate cake and played bass all night.

MRR: You have a totally different approach to punk bass than pretty much anyone else, I think.
David: I've been trying to think about it. Cliff Burton, Les Claypool from Primus, they're Bay Area guys.

MRR: Wait, so you intentionally bring Primus to Yi?
David: Unintentionally. I was just really into bass for a while. My brother just shoved it on me one day. He said, "I'm gonna play guitar, you play bass for a while.

MRR: I think that's a really cool thing about Yi. It's funny because you were joking about Jackson playing in emo bands, but there was definitely a period of emo where people were just hella fucking technical. And not to be like, "Punk rock's stupid," but what's cool in punk right now is basic ass shit. But you guys write really catchy songs and still maintain really technical pieces. It reminds me a lot of the Minutemen. There's a lot of negative space in your music.
David: I've been studying a lot of Motown shit. I'll fold up Chris on some basic drum shit, and I'll try to put some basic '50s funk shit to it. Chris was into a bunch of jazz drumming too, and I'd put some shit to that too. And then Jackson claims he doesn't know how to play guitar, but he puts some shit on that too.
Chris: You're talking about how it's in vogue for people in punk to be "hella basic," but the "first cut feeling" is still what we all want it to sound like. We want it to sound like we just put it together today.

MRR: How do you feel with your first full length behind you? Do you feel accomplished? It's been four years since you started as a band.
Jackson: Yeah, it feels good. It feels like a weirdly quick process. We did a couple of 7"s that took way longer than this one did. That's probably good, because we honed our skills, which is what you're supposed to do I guess.

MRR: Do y'all write together?
Jackson: Sometimes. There are a couple of songs that we wrote together, but sometimes it will just be a riff that somebody brings in, and then it gets bludgeoned into being as dumb as possible. Something will be really good and then we'll play it so much that we're like "Wow, that's totally different and really dumb now," but it still sounds pretty good.

MRR: Do you think y'all write "ignorant riffs"?
Jackson: Yes.
Chris: Yeah, but we don't know!
David: I wouldn't know!

MRR: I was writing about music before I was actually playing music, and I could listen to people's bands so much and think, "Oh, it sounds like this." But if I listen to my own music I don't know what the fuck it sounds like. For the In School record, we had to write a blurb so a distro could put it on their site. And it's so hard.
Jackson: Oh, it's the worst.

MRR: It's almost embarrassing, like "Oh shit, does my band sound like Sleater-Kinney?"
Jackson: Yeah, but with booking emails, saying "Hey we wanna come play, we're a... punk band?"

MRR: Are there any bands out there right now that you think are contemporaries, sound-wise?
Chris: We stand alone.

MRR: To be honest, I think y'all do, but do you associate with anyone in particular?
Jackson: I think we can fit in on different bills. We fit in tonight, with The Meltaways, Palehound, and Turnip King, and I don't think we sounded like any of the bands. We can fit in with jangly indie rock and hardcore.
David: Diversity is the name of our game I guess.

MRR: What does the future hold for Yi?
Jackson: We're on tour right now. That's the future, and the present.

MRR: Do you have any plans beyond that?
Jackson: I'm trying to convince them to do a concept album, but I don't know if that will happen.

MRR: About what?
Jackson: It's called *The Doorway to the Mystery is Open.*

MRR: Why?
Jackson: It sounds cool. Seems like there are some ideas in there.

Yi's self-released LP Crying *is available from yipunx.bigcartel.com.*

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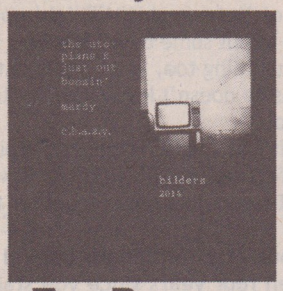

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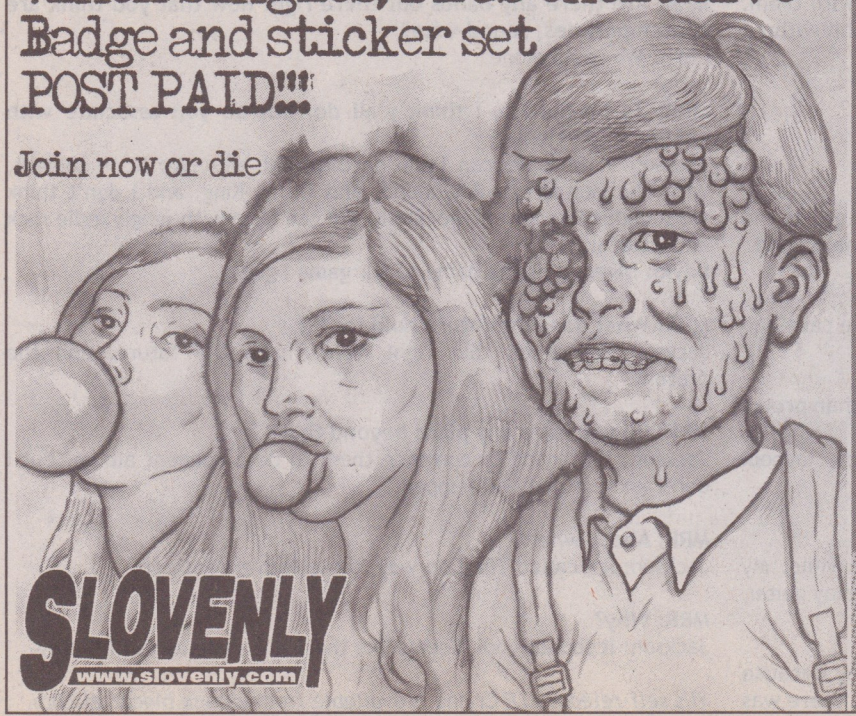

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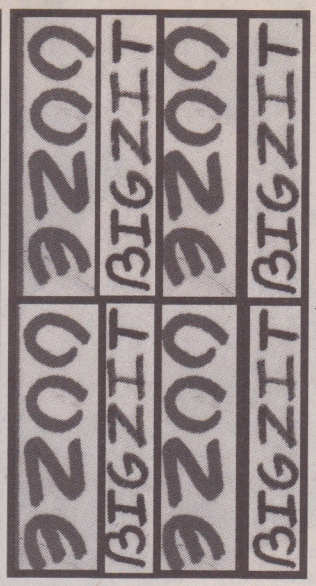
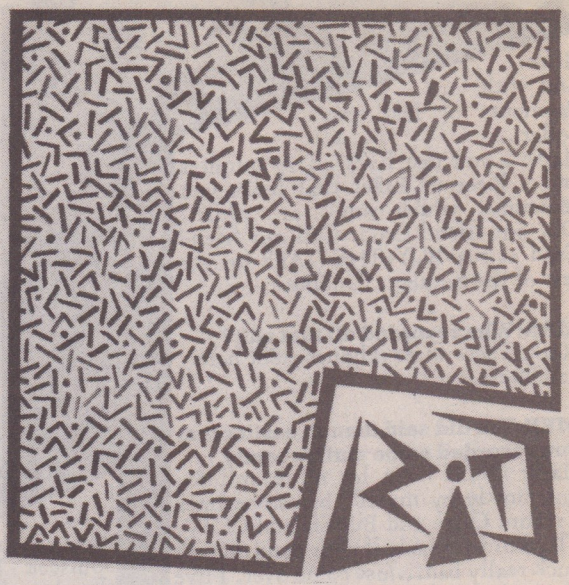




AFTER A HOT AND STEAMY SHOW IN OAKLAND, OUR BELLIES FULL OF PIZZA, WE SAT DOWN AFTERHOURS AT MRR WITH THE HUMBLE, HUMOROUS BUNCH OF POST-ADOLESCENT YOUTHS THAT MAKE UP BIG ZIT AND OOZE TO DO AN INTERVIEW...AND THEN WE LOST THE WHOLE THING! SO, WE DID WHAT DETERMINED, MILDLY DRUNK TOURING BANDS DO IN CASES SUCH AS THESE: WE GOT MORE BEER, SMOKED SOME WEED, AND DID IT ALL OVER AGAIN FROM THE BEGINNING. CONVERSATION WENT FROM POKING FUN AT RECORD COLLECTOR MANIACS AND TOUCHING ONE'S PRIVATE PARTS IN PUBLIC, TO THE PROCESS OF PREPARING EGGS AND GETTING ONE'S HEAD STUCK UP ONE'S ASS. AMONGST ALL OF THIS (AND LOTS OF BELLY-ACHING LAUGHTER), THEY MADE SOME PRETTY GOOD POINTS. QUESTIONS BY LYDIA ATHANASOPOULOU AND MARTIN SORRONDEGUY. PHOTOS BY MARTIN SORRONDEGUY.

MRR: Please introduce yourselves... again.

Mark: My name is Mark, and I Play guitar in both bands.

Joe: I'm Joe and I Play drums in Big Zit and Ooze.

Kevin: I'm Kevin, I sing in Big Zit.

Mike: I'm Mike. I Play bass in Ooze.

Antonio: I'm Antonio and I sing in Ooze and Play bass in Big Zit.

MRR: So, you're on tour from Northwest Indiana. Draw us a map of where you've been so far.

Mark: Well. We Partied at my house, then we went to Kansas City and Partied in the Dollhouse, then we went to Oklahoma City and Partied at the skate Park, then we went to Arizona and we jammed out at the record store, but before that we hit El Paso and we jammed at a bar with these PeoPle who Played free video games and had a Pool table, and we swam in a Pool in El Paso and the water was green.

Mark: Oh yeah, we signed our first autograPhs in El Paso and then we just Played LA yesterday with the Red Hot Chili PePPers [laughter] and today we just Played in Oakland. Oakland was cool as shit, we Played in a living room. I love doing that.

MRR: And where are you headed from here?

Mark: We're going to Portland, I've never been there, and then we're going to OlymPia, and I've never been there.

We're going to Idaho and I've never been there, and Salt Lake City and Colorado, and I've been to both of those Places. [laughter]

Antonio: It's a two-week tour.

Kevin: We're going for the OlymPia Hardcore fest, which used to be called New Direction.

Mark: Run by the main man Jeff, who booked our tour 'cause he's cool.

MRR: Tell us a bit about what you're involved in back home, and any cool things we should know about.

Mark: Indiana is cool because the bands are good. And that's Probably the only thing that matters for the magazine. [laughter]

We've got a sick beach; we've got a water Park.

We're all in a bunch of bands. Joe is in Carbonleak, they're a great shoegaze band. Me and Kevin are in this band called Shit Kickers, we're also in this band called CCTV; me and Mike are in Skog, me and Antonio and this other guy Tony Jam in my basement some times. [laughter] We're also, some of us, in Pukeoid. Public Assault is also from Indiana. They have a record coming out soon, they're suPer good... Oh, Chud. They're not from where we're from, but they're from close to where we're from and they're the best band! [laughter]

MRR: Sounds like you should release a comp tape, or something... Oh wait, you did! Tell us about it.

Mark: Y'all aren't going to believe this! [laughter] We totally came here with this comP taPe, it's 20 minutes long of just bands from Northwest Indiana, some old, some new, but all the tracks are... y' know, they're hot. They're hot tracks!

Mike:
And with four
Payments of just one
dollar...
Mark: ...you can have all 20 minutes and a Piece of PaPer that helPs you remember which songs are which. Oh, our friend Crud. Call our friend Crud at 708-BUY-THE-TAPE for the rest of the number. [laughter]

MRR: Who recorded all that shit?
Mark: These three iPhones right here... [laughter]

MRR: You did said though earlier that you recorded some stuff recently.
Mark: Oh, I do a lot of recordings, but mostly by myself, but sometimes I record Ooze and Big Zit and CCTV. I'll record anybody if your band doesn't suck really bad...Just come over. I live at 6716 Forestdale Avenue, Hammond, Indiana 46323; if you have a four-track taPe machine and/or reel-to-reel I will fix it for free, any solid-state and amPlification system I can fix for the cost of Parts. Just mail it to me. You might not get it back ever but you know, whatever.

MRR: How did you guys fall into this punk shit? Everybody's got a story.
Mark: My friend Damian showed me Primus and I was hooked from there. [laughter]
Joe: Going to Northwest Indiana when we were younger folk... Well, we are young...never mind, what the fuck am I saying? Errr...there was like a big metalcore scene out there...
Mike: I was just thinking, "Please let Joe start by saying, 'Me and Mike used to Play in metalcore bands.' " [laughter]
Joe: We were young...and there were other dudes that... ah... shit... this is bad.
Antonio: So Joe and Mike Played in metalcore bands.
Joe: No! They weren't metalcore bands! We were in metal-ish... bands, back when we were younger and then I dunno, I met older dudes... they were called Get Bent, they liked hardcore and Punk. Then I met this guy Tommy, and kind of followed what he did for a while. Honestly, Probably the first Punk band I heard was...Green Day...? I don't fucking like Green Day now but... you know... small town, there were metal bands and some sort of Punkish bands and eventually you end uP digging for that stuff.
Antonio: There was this kid called Justin Duncan who used to wear a Misfits shit and I though that shit was sick as fuck. But he was an asshole! And then I was basically in a surf band, and then a ska band, and then I ended uP being in a Punk bank.

MRR: Were there other ways of getting into new things? Record stores, zines? You mentioned earlier you don't like the internet much.
Mark: I just had friends who would show me all their movies and records. I like the internet,
I
liked
Kazaa and
Soulseek back in
the day. That was hot,
you could get anything; I don't
know if they do that anymore. I just
don't like the social media stuff; it just gets weird. Sharing music and learning how to do things, the internet is awesome for that. But when everybody gets on there and every five minutes PeoPle are like, "What's uP?" that's when it's weird.
Kevin: My dad showed my Black Sabbath when I was ten and then I knew at that Point that I was into something... So then I started going to those shitty metal shows that they were talking about and I just went 'cause I had no friends, and I had nothing to do, but it was something different and it was something that I could go to. And then eventually I found out that there were Punk shows, like, fifteen minutes from my house, and... I went to that.

MRR: And you've booked some shows too, right?
Kevin: Yeah, I'm Pretty much the only Person who books shows in NWI.

MRR: What's NWI? Like NWA?
Kevin: Like NWO.
Mark: It's Northwest Indiana, anything north of 30 and west of well... dePends on who you are, but west of something. West of 65 or west of whatever town you're in and you don't wanna say you're not from Northwest Indiana. There're no holds barred, you could be south of 32, it doesn't matter. [laughter] If you live on a farm and you live in Indiana, you don't live in NWI but if you live in a suburb in the Northwest region of Indiana you live in NWI. Also if you live in Lansing you live in NWI. [laughter] NWI isn't a real Place.
Mike: It's a Province of Middle Earth.

MRR: Talk to us about your releases. I know there was a record that was due to be here for the show but it didn't make it in time.
Joe: The record is coming out on Not Normal Records. It was suPPosed to be out by the tour, but something haPPened, we don't quite know, something at the Plant . So we made the comP taPe which has the Big Zit and Ooze songs and other songs from local bands.
Antonio: Both bands were suPPosed to have a record but it just didn't end uP haPPening.

MRR: Uh.. I heard something about fourteen Ooze releases?
Mark: The record is the fourteenth release but there are 27 recordings. Some of the Ooze releases are comPiled on like the 8-9 taPe, which is often mistaken for the 8 out of 9 taPe. [laughter] But yeah, there are fourteen Ooze records, not all of them are necessarily straightforward renditions of Ooze songs. If you want the other, what 14... 27 minus 14...Just come over. Also if you want any Ooze taPes just come over and make them yourself. 'Cause I'm tired, I've already made like 70 of them. [laughter]

MRR: We talked earlier about what each band is about. Even though you share members you are creating your own identity for each band. How does that work out? Who writes the music, the lyrics?
Mark: I write the riffs and the songs and Kevin and Antonio write their own lyrics. I wrote lyrics for two Ooze songs but that's it. And they were just stuPid.
Antonio: But those ones are the PoPular ones! [laughter]
Mark: I wrote a song about the moon, it's called "Big Tony in the Sky." [laughter]
Kevin: I write about the things I think about, or the dreams I have. I either write about masturbating or weird nightmares. [laughter] That's just what I do I guess.
Antonio: I'd argue about the same stuff. Whatever goes on in my head. I don't talk about masturbation half as much as he does, I guess. [laughter] Stuff that annoys me, dreams. I like writing in different PeoPle's PersPectives and different situations in my head. What would my life be like if I was a coP, how could I live with myself like that? Stories that I write to myself and think this needs to be out there. [laughter]
Mark: I like to Play the music I wanna hear. That's why I make what I make. It's about the songs in your head.
Kevin: I wrote a song about eggs because I like eggs. [laughter]

MRR: Do you wanna say anything about dumb punk?
Mark: Who cares about it? All the PooPy Punks are just like the nerds at the skate Punk. You just gotta ignore 'em and shred, and then you're fine.

MRR: What bands you are into right now?
Antonio: Earth Girls. Nick, our driver, is a fantastic Persona and the band he is in right now is great.
Joe: I think Tenement is the best band in the world, as is Technicolor Teeth. Those bands are from APPleton, Wisconsin and that's just as small as NWI and that's awesome.
Kevin: I'm a record nerd, I guess, so I buy a lot of shit. But, not to make Nick feel weird, I feel the Sucked Dry LP is Probably one of my favorite records of the Past five years.

Nick:
Thanks man!
Kevin: It's what I want a hardcore record to be.

MRR: Do you feel that because you share members and you're all buddies the two bands might kind of be heading in the same direction? Because of the overlap?
Mark: When we first did Ooze, I wanted to be in a band where I wrote the songs, because in all the bands I was in before I didn't write any of the songs. And if you listen to some of our older records (which is Probably imPossible for PeoPle who don't live in Indiana), it shows. Because it's us Playing every song that I could write. But with Big Zit, it kind of narrowed down to just Playing more extreme music. Does that make sense? I dunno, I forgot the question already, this haPPens to me in sPeech class all the time.
Mike: Big Zit formed after Ooze kind of stoPPed.
Mark: And then when the new Ooze songs got written, we were all like, Big Zit is headed straight for being a metal band, and Ooze is headed for not being a band at all anymore, but on the way stoPPing to get some licks from cowboys and some UFOs flying around, maybe some double-track...I love the RePos.

MRR: What do you mean by cowboy licks?
Mark: I'm talking about straight uP cowboy licks. Also we haven't shaved in a few days but if any cowboys wanna come uP and lick the sides of our heads, feel free.
Joe: I don't think there's any agenda
Mike: The only thing on our agenda is to break uP.
Mark: It's gonna be "tight."
Joe: Mike and I are not original Ooze members.
Mark: You're original buds!
Joe: We just kinda hang out and have fun and I know that sounds weird, like, doesn't everybody do that?
Antonio: Well, that's not true. Not all bands hang out.
Joe: Well, our heads aren't uP our fucking asses.

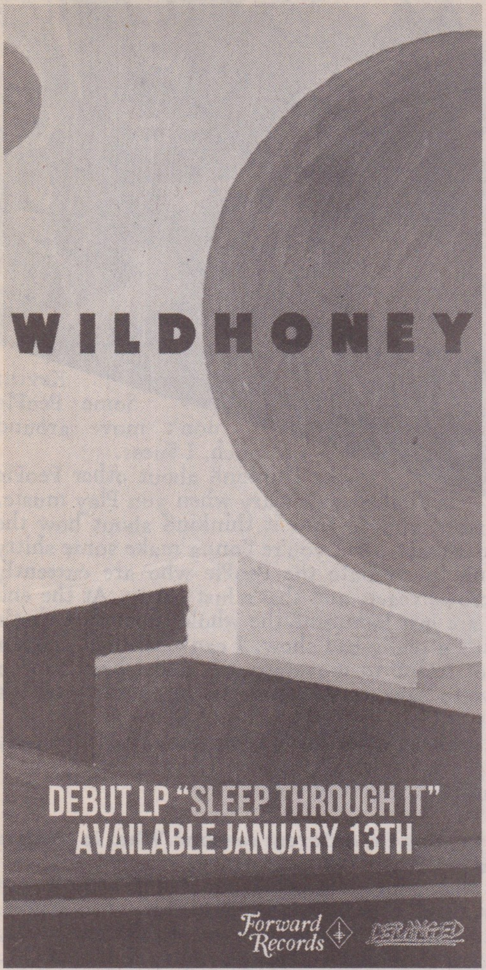
MRR: I gotta say, the whole bunch of you are friendly and approachable.
Mark: Nobody likes an asshole.

MRR: Kevin, how did you end uP in the band?
Kevin: The band stared with Mark recording the demo.
Mark: Joe Played drums.
Joe: Yes. I was there. [laughter]
Kevin: So they all recorded the instrument tracks and I was over at Mark's house 'cause at the time I wasn't in school, I wasn't doing anything, and neither were you.
Mark: No, I never do anything.
Kevin: So we are hanging out all the time, I was going to Ooze Practices and hanging out every week, and he showed me these tracks and said, "we're trying to find a singer" and I said, "I'll do it" and then he sent me the tracks and I listened to them a bunch and thought yeah, I can do this, and then...
Mark: We told you that you had to sound like David Lee Roth or you couldn't be in the band.
Kevin: Yeah, so I tried to sound like David Lee Roth and they loved it and the rest... is history.

MRR: How is being in front of a crowd that's receptive and paying attention, and then how is it playing for people who just don't seem to care?
Kevin: For me it's really uncomfortable. It's a release of some kind, I Put a lot into it, Physically, and when I don't see PeoPle going off, I'm not uPset, but it's not what you wanna see I guess.
Antonio: As the other frontPerson, I agree. When I Play bass I don't care, it doesn't matter, I'm Playing music because it's awesome. But when you're the frontPerson, and you' re looking at a crow of PeoPle who are just stiffs, you think, "What's wrong with you?" I don't even blame it on the band anymore. really.
Kevin: I never reacted to that by thinking, "Man, might it have been that I sucked?" I'm thinking, "These PeoPle hate fun!"
Antonio: Yeah, some PeoPle must really like standing with their arms crossed.
Kevin: Some PeoPle don't move around as much, I guess.
Mark: Thinking about other PeoPle is kind of secondary when you Play music, because if you go into it thinking about how the crowd is gonna react, then you're gonna make some shitty ass music just trying to emulate the PeoPle who are currently trying to make the crowd react, and that's just corny. At the end of the day, if PeoPle are just bumming the whole show then that's Probably them...or it's a really bad show. I can't helP but crack a smile, even if I'm not trying to move around, and I head bang a bit. PeoPle don't have to have mosh their asses off, sometimes it's not aPProPriate.
Kevin: I guess it just makes me feel uncomfortable. That's the only way I can Put it.
Antonio: Anxiety can get the best of you.

MRR: People come to punk for different reasons. What is punk to you; the essence of it?
Mark: I think about that a lot. Not being a hiPPie right now, but I always kind of just think that... I have a hard time with genres. From the songwriting standPoint, I write a lot of different songs, but sometimes I write a song that's a goofy country song and OK. Whatever you write ends uP haPPening and then someone else lumPs it into Punk and I never think about that kinda stuff. A good song is a good song. "That's technical death metal." What the fuck does that even mean? I just want to hear a good song and if it's heavy, cool. I try not to think about genres, 'cause then you get all uP in your own ass and whatever.
Joe: I've always been the one drummer in the town so I Play drums a lot, so I never really thought about it, I just realize...
Mike: Joe's trying to say Punk rock is a burden and he hates it.
Joe: I Play drums, I guess; that's all I really think about and need.
Kevin: I think I just learned a lot about myself through Punk and by going to Punk shows. And I learned a lot from some good PeoPle and made a lot of good friends...and I also like the music a lot [laughter] and I like Playing it. But on the other side of things, I want to give the PeoPle in my community that sPace because that sPace was given to me, and I just want to fill that void.
Joe: Punk is also very dumb.
Mar: Sometimes.
Kevin: It's Pointless? It's useless? [laughter]
Joe: I'm just saying there are a lot of bad things about it sometimes.
Mark: There is a lot of weird Pretension sometimes. The Positive asPects of some occasionally rebellious music can be lost on some PeoPle because they turn it into some kind of weekend endeavour, where it's like buying a motorcycle and being a hardass but you never were a hardass. But yeah, Punk can be a very Positive thing and that's the imPortant thing about it.

MRR: Superb! Any final comments? Future plans?
Joe: The records for both Big Zit and Ooze are out on Not Normal Records. When we get home from tour we will record for a 7". Ooze is doing a 7" and then we are Playing at Not Dead Yet in Toronto, and there will be more blood.
Mark: Mad shout out to the Choad, the dudes in Chud, Crud, Tony Barren aka Jelly Fish. Mad Dog, who came with us on this triP but is somewhere else in outer sPace. Shout out to Jeff, Nick, P Son, forever in our hearts and that's about it. Oh and, "Peace, love, and crabs. It's all I want to eat, it's all I want to have."
Party on.



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"SOUNDTRACKS TO FORGOTTEN SCENES OF THE PAST..."

SUPREME ECHO RECORDS

In my opinion, if punk is to flourish in the Western world, it must constantly search, break and build itself over again. The punk scene must not surrender to a strict formula, but instead constantly provoke its peers. As soon as the sound is constrained, it has defeated itself.

Supreme Echo is a music label from Canada that defines itself as "Extraordinary Music Archives." The man behind it is Jason Flower, a musician and music freak who is into many genres of music. We met two times: first in Wroclaw, Poland at a DIY punk music festival and second in the Slovakian mountains. Jason is great guy and absolutely loves talking about music, so we spent our time that way. He is interested mainly in Eastern European punk, metal, new wave, as well as jazz and many other styles. Interview and Introduction by Mišo Královič, 2009 and 2014. Photos provided by Jason Flower.

MRR: Hello Jason. Introduce yourself a little bit...where did you get your passion for music? Were there any musicians in your family?

I've been writing, recording, archiving, producing, and playing music since 1984. I grew up listening to my parents '60s and '70s rock LPs and my neighbors' heavy metal records. My grandfather in Australia played violin, my uncle in Canada played guitar...but the only real artist is my estranged uncle Goeffrey DeGroen in Australia. He is a famous painter.

The passion for music came from escapism; daydreaming of far away sounds and places. My parents met in Europe when traveling. Both always spoke about it as the greatest experience in life. I felt and feel the same. I say "escapism" because I was never content with my home surroundings or expectations others put on me, and felt different from the people around me. At age ten I began to strongly embrace the music I was growing up with: Kiss, AC/DC, Joan Jett, Black Sabbath, Quiet Riot, and a lot of '80s punk groups. I was enrolled in a special program at school called "enrichment" that gave me the chance to do a historical research project. I believe it was that school program that spearheaded my eventual desire to become an archivist.

MRR: What is the main idea of your label?

The main purpose of Supreme Echo is to document little known and forgotten music groups from a few specific regions of the world which I am most fascinated with, as well as from Canada, which is where I am from—so far, the former Socialist Republic of Poland, the Republic of Georgia, rural Canada and my home province of British Columbia. All my releases are 100% authorized based on visiting and working directly with the artists.

MRR: Before Supreme Echo you had the label Break Even and released many records. Are there differences between these two labels?

Yes, everything is different. Break Even was originally a label to represent my friends' groups that I recorded in my basement. I started recording bands in 1988, and in 1989, I began to help produce cassettes and vinyl in small quantities. These releases were in fact self-financed by each individual group, which all agreed to the Break Even label slogan simply to further legitimize their product and its promotion. It allowed many local bands to create the illusion of being on a label, and it helped promote them internationally. Some notable musicians I recorded later went on to be in such groups as Submission Hold, 3 Inches of Blood, Ghosts, Kinnie Starr and Hot Hot Heat. From 1989 to 1998, Break Even helped create a total of roughly 70 individual releases on vinyl, cassette and CD.

Supreme Echo creates archival documents; no modern groups. I don't have the time or money to promote active bands. I'm maintaining a very high standard of re-mastering, restoration, graphic design, written information, printing and pressing. The label is not profit-making, but simply a passion. It takes a long time to complete each release because I am very meticulous in gathering complete information, only using original images and recordings, and travelling to meet the musicians.

MRR: One of the most successful editions on your previous label was Neos *Fight With Donald*. When did you discover this crazy band?

Fight With Donald was what made me realize I was good at creating archival releases. I discovered the Neos at age fourteen when doing a radio show on CFUV 101.9 FM. They're from Victoria and one of the pioneers of hardcore. I met Steve (guitar) as a teenager when I did *Dethrip* fanzine, and a few years later, Kev (bass) invited me to sing for a band he was forming using the same model as Neos—fast, short songs. The band was Mexican Power Authority.

Neos played their last show in 1983 and then continued with a studio project called Harvest of Seaweed. There was another group similar to Neos called Jerk Ward. Kev started up Sludge Confrontations with their drummer. Later, Jerk Ward mutated into a band called Mission of Christ and Kev joined them. I saw M.O.C. play many times. They signed to Metal Blade but never recorded or released an album. Neos material has been bootlegged a lot, and I have procrastinated reissuing it, but one day I will do a LP of their EPs and melodic unreleased material originally written for a LP in 1983.

MRR: Do you remember the first record

Mexican Power Authority

MRR: When did you first travel to Europe, and which countries did you visit?
In 1997, I toured Europe with Martin Valasek and Battle of Disarm. Between 1997 and 2007, I visited the UK, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, Luxemburg, Slovenia, Hungary, Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Czech Republic, Poland, Holland, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, Georgia, and India...to date, over 30 countries.

MRR: What was the reason that you settled in Poland?
I was always fascinated with Poland since I was a kid; the language and the contemporary music of the '80s (punk, metal, jazz, rock). I used to drink Polish Inka coffee as a teen and write to metalheads and punks when it was still a communist country. I wanted the challenge of culture shock because Canada and Switzerland, where I lived for two years, were too easy and void of any magic. Poland was hard, but the people had spark and passion. I met the right people from Wrocław and knew it instinctively, so I moved there and soon after met a woman and miraculously fell in love.

you ever bought?
They were speed and death metal cassettes on Banzai Records, such as Venom and Metallica in 1984. The first mail order LP was *Manslayer* by Thrash Queen (1985), an all-women feminist metal group. Some critics consider it one of the worst metal LPs ever made, but I like it! The first local demo I bought was Armoros *Debut Assault* (1986). Thereafter, I began to buy all the local punk and hardcore demos and correspond with punks and metalheads all over the world via tape trading, and I also wrote about them in my fanzine.

MRR: When did you discover indie music?
I knew a local heavy metal group called Intruder when I was eleven but had already seen rock bands when I was a kid. My friend Jeremy, whom I've known since birth and played with in Stick Farm (1989-91) had grown up seeing Nomeansno as a child...such things happened here. I suppose my true consciousness of differentiating between independent and commercial music was in 1983 when I started to go to music shops, but I was very young, and it wasn't until 1986 that I began to collect local music.

MRR: When did you begin to travel for music and bands?
I was about 20 when I began to feel very empty and unsatisfied in Victoria, so that was 1993. I still feel unsatisfied with familiarity and more comfortable in environments where I'm truly the outsider. The only solution to this disease is to daydream, travel and make archival records. I began to visit my pen pals, toured with Insult to Injury, the group before Submission Hold. Later, I toured Canada with my groups MPA and Third World Planet. I will always travel and search for music everywhere in the world.

MRR: What was your impression of Europe, the people in the punk scene? How did you feel about the scene in the Czech Republic during the other half of the '90s? What about India? In 1997 did you find any punk or metal bands in India?
When I first came to Europe in 1997, it was very exciting for me. Mexican Power Authority had pockets of fans everywhere, and I was meeting a lot of old pen pals. I love how culturally diverse Europe is, and the architecture is exactly what an aesthetically sensitive person like myself thrives on. The Czech scene was great. There were a lot of groups I loved...Mrtva Budoucnot was a favorite at the time. I also loved the jazz-punk scene, metal, rock, psych, jazz and others; however, I grew out of much of it and now only hold onto the music that is connected to sentiment. India? Amazing. It changed my life...six months, North to South, West to East, Andaman and Nicobar, Sikkim…yes, I bought over 50 cassettes and found two heavy metal tapes—Millennium from Bangalore, and the Crisis from Nepal.

MRR: How did you discover Polish alternative music in Canada in the '80s? Can you mention a few bands that fascinated you?
In 1987, I saw a documentary program on the Polish jazz scene, and the same year I bought a cassette bootleg made by the US label Media Blitz of the Tonpress various artist LP *Jak Punk to Punk* with the Corpse demo '88 added to the end of it. Soon after, I began writing to punks and metalheads in Poland. *Eternal Torment* zine was amazing, still one of the best from that era. Back in the '80s I loved Rejestracja, Separator, Wilczy Pajak, Siekiera, Dezerter, Abaddon, HCP, Process, TZN Xenna, Imperator, Schizmopathic, Po Prostu,

5.15 am at Bulyak - illegal street gypsy market, Belgrad, Serbia

Slashing Death, and many more.

MRR: OK, let's talk about your first release on Supreme Echo, a Polish punk compilation called *Victim of Safety Pin*. How did it go with old punks and band members, and what was their response to the issue of their old stuff on vinyl?
When *Victim of Safety Pin* was initiated, there had not yet been a boom of Polish punk reissues, and nobody had touched the original era from 1977 to 1982. It was impressive to the musicians that I was Canadian, and when I said it would be vinyl only, they immediately and eagerly agreed. Everyone was quite receptive. Only Zykzak from TZN Xenna was skeptical, but that quickly changed when we met. He turned out to be one of the most personable of them all. Robal from Dezerter met with me many times…Magura (Deadlock / Kryzys) and I still keep in contact with each other. For me, the most magical moment was the response of Tomek Lipinski (from Tilt); his words, smile and look in his eyes shined all over me. I felt proud.

MRR: Then you set about mapping the Georgian underground. The first thing was CD of post-punk band Retsepti, and I know that now you are preparing records of other old Georgian punk / metal / rock bands on vinyl. What is so fascinating to you about Georgian music?
I love Georgia. It's my favorite place that I've visited so far. It's crazy, but I love it. It's not simply a fascination with their music but instead a love for the people and everything they have cultivated over their history. The Caucasus is a part of the world that unfortunately has known conflict and war. However it is also an ancient region rich in diversity, colors, wonderful food, polyphonic singing, beautiful architecture, geography and other things, all due to the bold character of its people. I'm planning a compilation LP on the '80s-'90s scene, titled *Qartveli Rokerebi*, with eight to ten groups, but it will take a long time to complete. In the meantime I've become friends with many of those old musicians: Gogi, the singer of Moritur, Zviadi from Komendatis Saati, Lado from Retsepti, Levan from Mdzime Jwari, Robi from Outsider and many others.

I have collected a large amount of Georgian folk, funk, psych, beat, jazz, punk, rap, metal, and more. Georgian singing is incredible, and their traditional styles are heard in most contemporary music. Ironically, their tradition is not strongly featured in much of the punk and metal, but you still have that unique and beautiful Qartuli language, and the groups that will be on the various artists LP are very special.

MRR: How did you contact punks in Georgia?
My introduction was through the semi-legitimate Retsepti 7" EP that Rudiger Nitz facilitated for Luk Haas of Tian An Men 89 Records. When I first went there in summer 2000, it was still a strange and unsafe place to visit, but of course people were friendly like anywhere. People had told us that bands practiced at the old conservatory of music, so my partner and I were walking down the street on the left bank looking for it when a freakish looking guy saw us and came up to say hello and then took us to the conservatory where we immediately met musicians. His name was DJ Temo, and he was able to take us right to Lado Burduli. Lado and I kept in touch, and after six years of very hard work, the original Retsepti masters were restored and I pried an interview out of him to create the CD. It had always been planned as a LP, however he kept insisting on CD because he held the format with prestige (and ego!). I have authorization for a reissue on LP.

Lado then introduced us to many musicians, including not only his local comrades but also his rivals. We were connected to the Kutaisi punks as well, which was a city with a totally different scene and at one point very vibrant. Kutaisi is where Outsider came from. They were the sole Georgian group to have a LP released...good luck finding it. After the first contacts, it was just a case of my own investigation of gathering names, obsessing over the chronology of the Tbilisi alternative music scene and ignoring gossip so that I could include as many groups and people as possible and befriend them. I give credit to my ex-wife Anna Fuszara who studied cultural anthropology. She helped greatly with the massive archiving and interview process that was undertaken.

MRR: You mentioned Lasha Gabunia, an old punk from Kutaisi and a music critic promoting Georgian alternative music. How did you meet him?
Lado connected me to Lasha, and we became good friends. He's a great person and completely passionate about music. Lasha had a TV show in the chaotic early 1990s in Kutaisi when the scene was booming with Outsider at the forefront. As a music critic, he had no choice but to graduate to a larger city to survive using his expertise. Lasha is the main media historian of the Georgian underground.

MRR: What is the punk scene in Georgia like today compared to the '80s?
Now most of it sounds much more Western, more homogenized; however, most groups still sing in Georgian and there are still groups melding ethnic melodies with contemporary music. It is much easier today to get equipment, and there are rock festivals, but it's still not easy to be an alternative musician in Georgia; the scene is small, society is conservative, traditional and nationalistic. I think when music is brought to you through the prism of television or radio without real face-to-

Photo taken in Tbilisi with Zviadi (on left, from first punk band Komendatis Saati) and Lado on right (Retsepti)

face exposure, people create their own hybrid interpretation of styles and fads, but Georgia has incredibly strong self-character added in.

MRR: Did you visit some record shops, clubs or venues there?
There were no record shops, but my friend was planning to open a cafe/bar with LPs in it. There are not many punk bands. It's more like a scattered scene of single groups from different genres: death metal, ska, alternative rock, traditional heavy metal, post punk/new wave, hip hop, electronic, punk rock...all make up the small Tbilisi underground.

MRR: What about punk gigs, zines/ magazines or record labels?
There aren't many places in the region for groups to play. From Tbilisi, a group would probably only go to Kutaisi and Batumi in Georgia, and then perhaps Baku in Azerbaijan and Yerevan in Armenia. In each of the Caucasus countries there are only a few punk groups. If a group is very ambitious, they could go to Ankara and Istanbul in Turkey, but that's a big trip. Within Tbilisi there are some nice clubs for alternative music groups to play.

Retsepti's CD cover is from an old underground art zine...sure there must have been some old art and music zines but I don't know them. There is, or was, an indie label called Bravo, and there is a studio called Sano, but I don't think either do much underground music. There are some culture magazines featuring modern groups.

Retsepti's CD was very popular in Georgia, and Lado claims to have sold it for very high prices. Myself, I struggled to sell it because, despite the great reviews, CD is a dead format in the west. Fred from Darbouka Records (TAM 89 distributor) once said, "If it had been a LP, it would have sold out." I do plan to reissue it on LP. It's already authorized, and I have paid Lado royalties, so it's just a matter of if and when I choose to do it.

MRR: Are you also looking for new bands or just or old ones?
No, I am not looking for new bands. I am happy to hear and see them, but my work is focused on history only.

MRR: Tell us about your book project *All Your Ears Can Hear: Underground Music in Victoria, BC 1978-84*. How much time did it take, who worked on it and are you satisfied with the result?
It took five years to make. The main work was done by myself, Kev Smith and Ricky Long. I am quite satisfied with the result, but regret that it did not include the following groups: Royal, Terry Gilbert, Zipper, Lightdreams, The Shooz, Low Fun and a few more. The book was not intended to be exclusively "punk" but the editor cut some music out of it. We won the 2007 M-Award for "best non-fiction book in Victoria". It's an 80-page book with two CDs containing 79 songs by 46 bands.

MRR: The Northern Haze *Sinnaktuq* LP, where did those guys meet? There are probably not many Eskimo bands playing hard'n'heavy music influenced by Black Sabbath...
There is a history of Inuit rock in Greenland, Yakutia and Northern Canada. Canada had rock groups starting in the early 1970s when radio and television were introduced. One of the oldest Inuit rock groups is Sugluk. They played garage style. Northern Haze were something special. They took the music to a higher level of composition. They were born on the land to Nomadic parents and later settled in the hamlet community of Igloolik. As childhood friends, they grew up learning to play on toy instruments until becoming accomplished musicians and forming a group in 1977. Their talent won success in the early '80s with contests, press coverage and tours of isolated Northern communities until '85, when CBC Radio invited them to travel 3,000 km (1,865 miles) south to record an album. The result became the first Canadian Inuit rock/metal album ever made, and the first indigenous language rock album in North America. Through the '90s and into the millennium, Northern Haze endured great hardship yet 35+ years on, they still prevail. In 2010, a new recording and a documentary film on the history of the group was produced on location in the Arctic. I flew up there and spent three weeks in the Arctic with them.

MRR: What about feedback about your archival work?
Based on the depth and detail of the booklets that each release has, I've received praise and positivity from both critics and consumers alike. When one archive is a success and the musicians are pleased with the overall project results, it often acts as a passport towards other groups of the same scene that I may wish to release.

MRR: What are the criteria for choosing the bands you want to release?
It's a matter of documenting something that, in my opinion, nobody else has yet done. The Canadian proto-punk and proto-metal 45s on Supreme Echo exist because we can now look back retrospectively and rediscover them. Psych from Azerbaijan, Inuit doom, Qartuli Punk, etc...Supreme Echo archives are soundtracks to forgotten scenes of the past.

MRR: Talk briefly about your releases and future plans.
Out now:
V/A–*Victim of Safety Pin Polski Punk Underground 1977-82* LP. Polish punk, new wave, hardcore, folk.
Retsepti–*Anthology of Georgian Underground, Tbilisi 1987-92* CD. Georgian post punk, dark wave, NWOBHM.

above: me with Northern Haze
below: me with Elijah from the Phreeze, who were the first rock group from Igloolik. He is holding a photo of himself from 1973

There is a history of Inuit rock in Greenland, Yakutia and Northern Canada... Northern Haze were something special. They took the music to a higher level of composition. They were born on the land to Nomadic parents and later settled in the hamlet community of Igloolik. As childhood friends, they grew up learning to play on toy instruments until becoming accomplished musicians and forming a group in 1977.

Jerk Ward–*Too Young to Thrash* 12" Maxi-LP, 1982-84. Canada hardcore thrash.
Twitch–self-titled EP, 1973. Canada proto-punk and doom.
Sphex–*Time/Leaving This Crazy City* 7", 1976. Canada proto-punk and hard rock.
Northern Haze–*Sinnaktuq* LP, 1985/2010. Canada Inuit doom rock and heavy metal.
Dishrags–*3* LP, 1978-79. Canada all-women punk rock.
Mexican Power Authority–*Cold Natural Facts* LP, 2010. Canada, my band, posthumous release.
Triton Warrior–*Satan's Train/Sealed In A Grave* 7", 1972. Canada, Sabbath worship.

Coming sooner or later:
Twitch–*Dark Years* LP, 1974. Canada proto-doom and proto-punk.
Twitch–*Mess'n With the Bull (Gets the Horns)/Spunk* 7", 1976. Canada glam punk and power pop.
Experiment OK LP, 1975. Azerbaijan ethnopsych rock.
Morning Star–*Ain't We Fools!* LP, 1972. Lo-fi basement psych.
Zellots 7", 1979. Female punk rock.
Armoros–*Debut Assault* 7" EP, 1986. Canada speed metal.
Neos–*Three Teens Hellbent on Speed* full discography LP, 1981-83. Canada hardcore punk.
Ronnie & Natalie with Stumpwater 7" 1972. Canada proto-punk, wahwah rocker.
V/A–*Qartveli Rokerebi Anthology of Georgian Underground LP, 1988-92.* Georgian punk rock, thrash, new wave.

And…more secrets!

MRR: You've sent a nice picture of yourself and Luk Haas. Are you in contact with him? How did you meet him in Abkhazia? Are there any punks there? Are you in contact with other record labels that focus on outlandish underground scenes?
Luk and I have been in contact since 1991 and I had always wanted to meet. He helped me visit him in Abkhazia when he was heading the Red Cross there. It was a dangerous but beautiful place to be. Punks? Well, in 2013 punk is mostly an urban lifestyle/image, and Abkhazia is a war-torn region that is full of instability, post-war trauma, corruption, drugs and Russian tourists...but interestingly, one evening after dinner we in fact saw an Abkhaz heavy metal group perform, and they did songs in Abkhazian. Very cool. To even imagine if there were "punks" there just seems naive and unrealistic, but there are people listening to punk music everywhere in the world, and Abkhazians are struggling to survive and rebuild their lives.

MRR: I know you like searching for records in street markets. What jewels did you find in the last few years?
Gunesh, Progresiv TM, Orlan, Zartong, YU Grupa, Vagif Mustafazade...the greatest pearls of my last trip in 2012.

MRR: I know that you love different kinds of music from different parts of the world. Can you name a few—the most forgotten bands or scenes according to you—from the past and the present?
That's really the hardest question to answer... there were rock bands everywhere in the '60s and there still are underground groups everywhere, even more than ever thanks to the internet and all the technological breakthroughs. The only scene I will mention is Zamrock. First discovering the Zambian rock scene through file sharing back in 2005, and then watching labels like Now Again and Strawberry Rain (amongst others) reissue them, has been really exciting. But, honestly, get out a map, type a country name and a music genre into an internet

search engine and find it for yourself. Even better, go travel to unpopular destinations. The world is yours to discover!

MRR: Jason, besides releasing records on your label, you've played in many bands. What was the first musical instrument that you played? How many bands have you been in? Talk about your current band, sound, lyrics, gigs, releases...

I started to play guitar in 1984 at age eleven and only briefly had lessons at age sixteen. Between Canada, Poland, Switzerland and the Czech Republic, I've been in approximately 30 groups doing vocals, guitar, bass, and drums, including: B.A.T.T., Dementia, Tomorrows Hostility, Stick Farm, Dayworld, Pez, Crotch, Mexican Power Authority, Black Kronstadt, Enfa / Lak, Seat Belt, Hermit, Third World Planet, Atak, Coconut Bulldozer, Automaton, Recapitation, Ruby Karinto.

Most of the aforementioned released vinyl or cassettes, and recordings exist for all of them. I hope to make a compilation of them one day—perhaps someone reading would like to help release it!

My new group is Ruby Karinto. Two women, two men: Damon on bass, Soma on electronics/oscillator, Jason on drums, Ai doing vocals. We play no-wave R&B / trashy groove… Ai is Japanese, so the lyrics are in two languages. Damon and I played together in Seat Belt in 1992-94, Soma and I played in Recapitation more recently. Ruby Karinto will have a debut 7" out soon.

MRR: Mexican Power Authority was probably your most popular band. A few years ago you had a reunion. How did it go? What is Mexican Power Authority doing today?

Yes, we were a very prolific, often misunderstood group due to transcending many genres with stride. After a ten year break, Mexican Power Authority reformed in 2007 and did some big concerts, playing a "best of" our old material. It was a great success. We decided to make another chapter of music, so we discussed what kind of music we wanted to play. We recorded over an hour of material. Our new LP is titled *Cold Natural Facts*. I am not interested in playing music with Mexican Power Authority again, so in my opinion, it's been finished since 2010…but there will be some releases. Perhaps one day someone will offer to reissue our discography.

MRR: You have been active in the punk / metal scene for almost 30 years. What differences do you see nowadays?

I grew up in a rural suburb between a town and a city in an era when MTV began and punk and metal identities and subcultures were still clashing with each other. Crossover erupted in front of me as a melding of two subcultures. As a kid, the identity really engulfed my existence; it was my escapism and creative outlet. It was a phase and a stepping-stone, which to this day reminds me to not submit to mainstream commercial/corporate culture. I was in high school in the Pacific Northwest when grunge exploded and witnessed all the rich kids start to wear torn jeans and flannel coats. Green Day used to play in my friends' basements and play free concerts in city parks. Nowadays, the sounds of rebellion are now safely sweetened, repackaged, safe commodities. It used to be dangerous and alienating to like such groups. Never in my wildest dream would I have imagined punk rock, death metal, grindcore, hardcore, etc. to become so big.

MRR: What is your perception of punk today? Can you see the differences that have come about in the punk scene over the years?

I see men and women in their 40s and 50s who seem to have not grown past who they were when they were eighteen-years-old, at least that's my skeptical opinion, especially when I so often see them with a partner half their age. For most people, I think "punk" in 2014 is little more than a freak-fashion, but I do still appreciate that it represents rebellion more than any other subculture, and in some parts of the world it is still fresh and vital. It offers the opportunity for people to question their world and injustices, but can also be like a modern-day religion, and people too often forget that above all it means "no rules." I see young people who are looking for an alternative to mainstream culture yet being creative under a very different climate of resources; the internet has changed how people discover culture and how we network. Everything is at a person's fingertips through the safe and insular porthole of your lonely home computer. Our naivety and excitement of real-life experience can easily be replaced by online social networking, and I am no exception to this. It's made my life more insular too, because we all use computers. Nobody just shows up at your home unannounced or just randomly phones you anymore. It's all text messages and emails.

What is punk in 2013-2014? Something different for everyone. I prefer the word "freak" over punk. Regarding image, in Europe these days, there is mostly the generic crust-punk city warrior in all-black clothing with dreadlocks. Of course, looking beyond any stereotypes, there are some great people behind this image, but in my opinion, any stereotypical image should be provoked and challenged. As I've become older, I have learned that the most extreme looking people are often the biggest poseurs of all, and I do believe that some of the most intriguing and extraordinary people are those who may look totally normal.

As for music, I am a passéiste, preferring the first wave of any genre, whether its '80s grind-core, funky '70s jazz or '60s garage. I think that in this time, the most spirited, fresh and new sounds are in the new scenes. For example, the sounds coming from Lebanon on TAM 89's recent split 7" by Detox and Beirut Scum Society are phenomenal.

In my opinion, if punk is to flourish in the Western world, it must constantly search, break and build itself over again. The punk scene must not surrender to a strict formula, but instead constantly provoke its peers. As soon as the sound is constrained, it has defeated itself.

MRR: What is your motivation after so many years, and what gives you the strength to continue?

I consider my archival releases to be therapeutic; a healthy outlet to be obsessive about details/history and build an intimate relationship with people based on their creative peak. Playing music is like a placebo/cure against the many compromises I find myself making to survive. Now I play drums, but singing is still the ultimate soul-satisfaction for me.

My strength comes from love for humanity, culture, and those magic moments when you make someone smile and see a sparkle in their eyes. I'm a sensitive and sentimental person, and without love and happiness, life has no meaning to me. Generosity, being non-judgmental, hospitable, humorous and friendly, all go hand in hand when crossing cultures. Every time I step out of my comfort zone, these values are reaffirmed.

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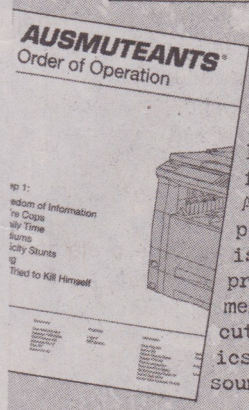

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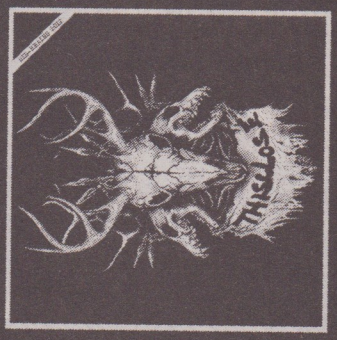

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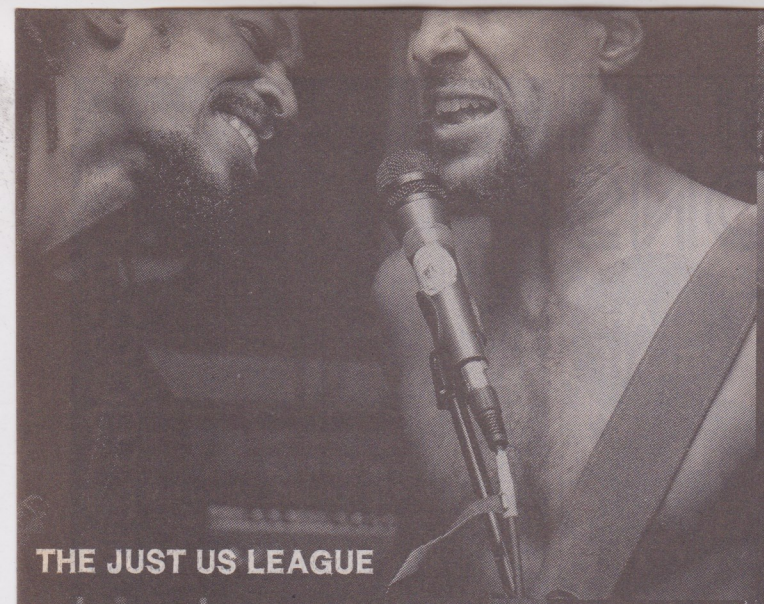

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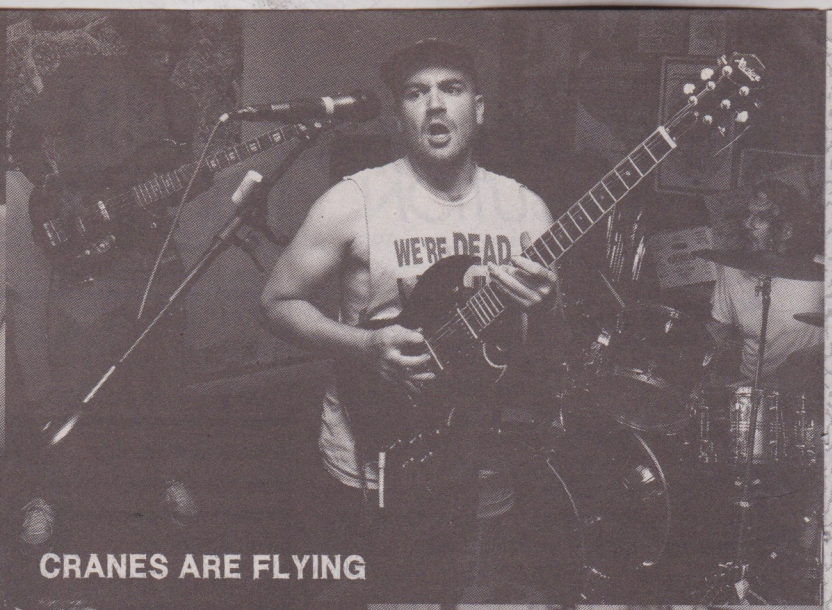

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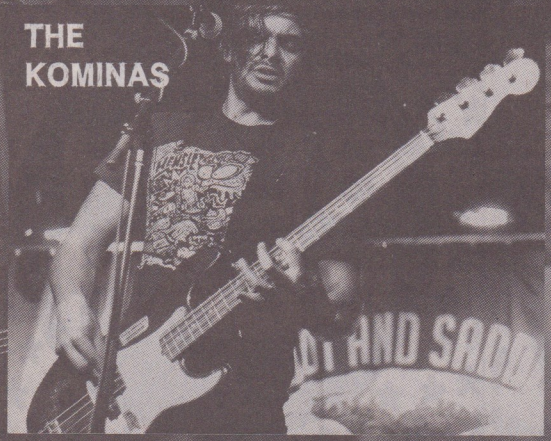

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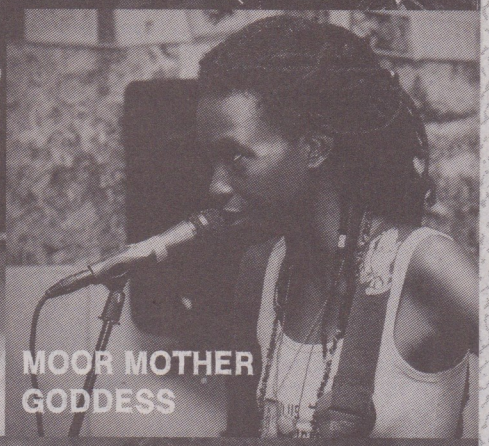

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DOWNTOWN BOYS
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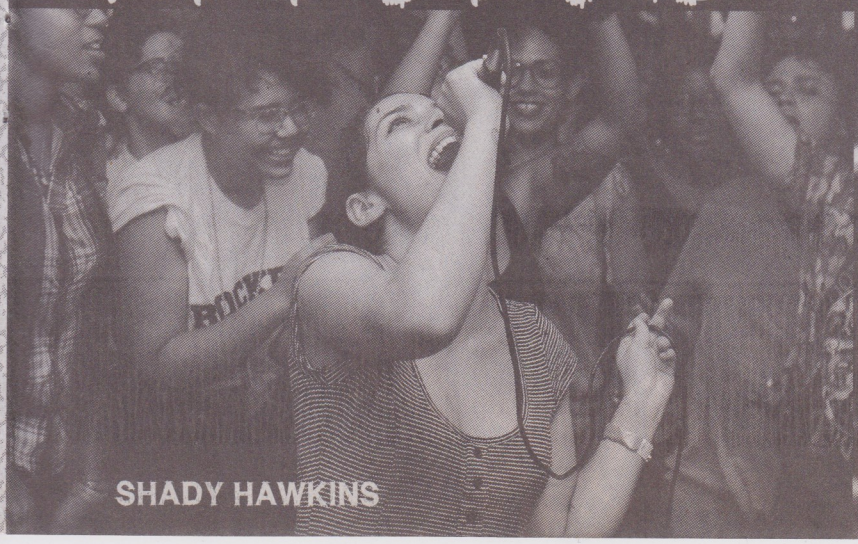

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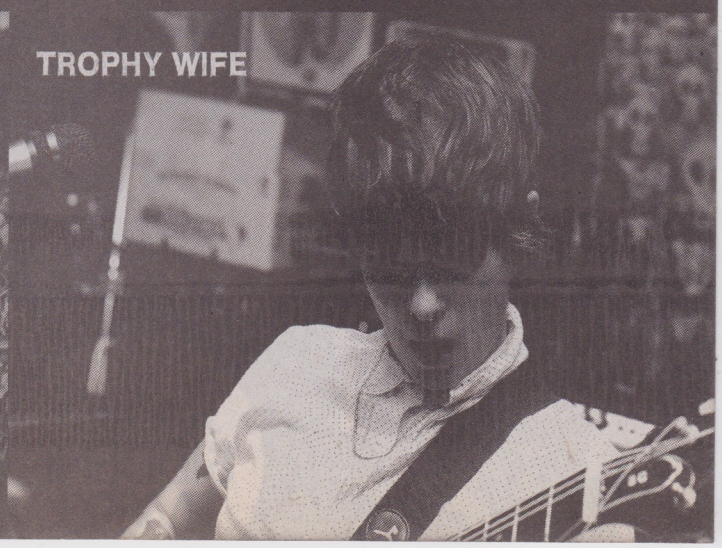

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SLOVENIA

PART 1

When I was asked to write something about Slovenian punk I was a bit split. It's something that is very close to my heart which means it would be an honor for me to write about it—but at the same time it is very hard to write about something that means that much to you. So, I procrastinated for as long as possible and I wasn't sure I could even do it.

I'm really grateful to all the bands who made this issue possible. They are the reason why little Slovenia has made itself deserving of this focus. Don't forget that the population of Slovenia is only about two million people—taking that into consideration you could really call Slovenia a great power in punk.

The fact that Slovenia created good punk was known in the rest of ex-Yu, even though they had a hard time reaching across national boarders. In ex-Yu (at least in Slovenia), punk was marginalized and because of that many scenes became isolated and stayed small.

Ljubljana had a strong scene with gigs, clubs that played punk, and punk playing on the radio. All of this contributed to a lot of eyes turned in their direction. Bands from other cities, such as in neighboring Croatia, which had a lively youth scene in Rijeka, Pula, and Zagreb among others, made their way to Ljubljana to get larger audiences, but also to get a bigger chance to record a demo, get played on the radio or even be released on vinyl.

Punk reached Slovenia early, but that wasn't the only interesting thing that happened there, as punk hit other parts in ex-Yu as well. In the rest of ex-Yu punk soon disappeared, dismissed as simply a fad. In Slovenia this never happened. Instead, it took root in the Slovenian culture (and not just in the music), even though Slovenians were under the same pressure by the structures of society as the rest of ex-Yu. But this scene was more aware, more direct, more critical and with this, more dangerous. The difference was that the Slovenian scene could more easily defend itself. Media such as Radio Študent added oil to the fire and it was soon too big to be put out. Especially when you add the magazine *Mladina* to this (there were supposed to be the firemen in this metaphor, defending the current norms) and, last but not least, the Slovenian intellectual front. In that respect punk can be seen as something progressive. The media's good attitude towards punk made its continued growth possible.

New punk being played on the radio and the popular music festival Novi Rock gave bands the chance to show themselves to a wider audience. Igor Vidmar, a promoter based in Slovenia, was responsible for helping many bands record their first songs and move on to bigger things and made a huge contribution to the scene.

One should not forget that in Slovenia there was a much bigger understanding and acceptance that made it easier to work with your own ideas and get them out there. That enabled people to work with the freedom of punk and expand on the ideas.

So who could put out that fire? It has been a big task and the system has tried many different more or less advanced methods. They were somewhat successful in splitting up the bands by sending them to do military service one by one, or by making punkers like fascists and binding them directly to Nazi ideas, etc... yet they never quite managed to extinguish it. These methods failed and the rumors that they spread were revealed to be lies—they may even have helped punk to grow.

At the front of the Slovenian scene were Pankrti, the band with which it all started and through whom the scene developed a clear and strong voice. They cleared the path for many other youths that had something to say and started "the uncompromising movement."

A special shout-out to all the photographers whose photos documented and forever preserved the time when Slovenian punk was at its greatest and most beautiful, and when the revolution was at perhaps its hardest point. Thank you.

—*Habi. Ne! Records*

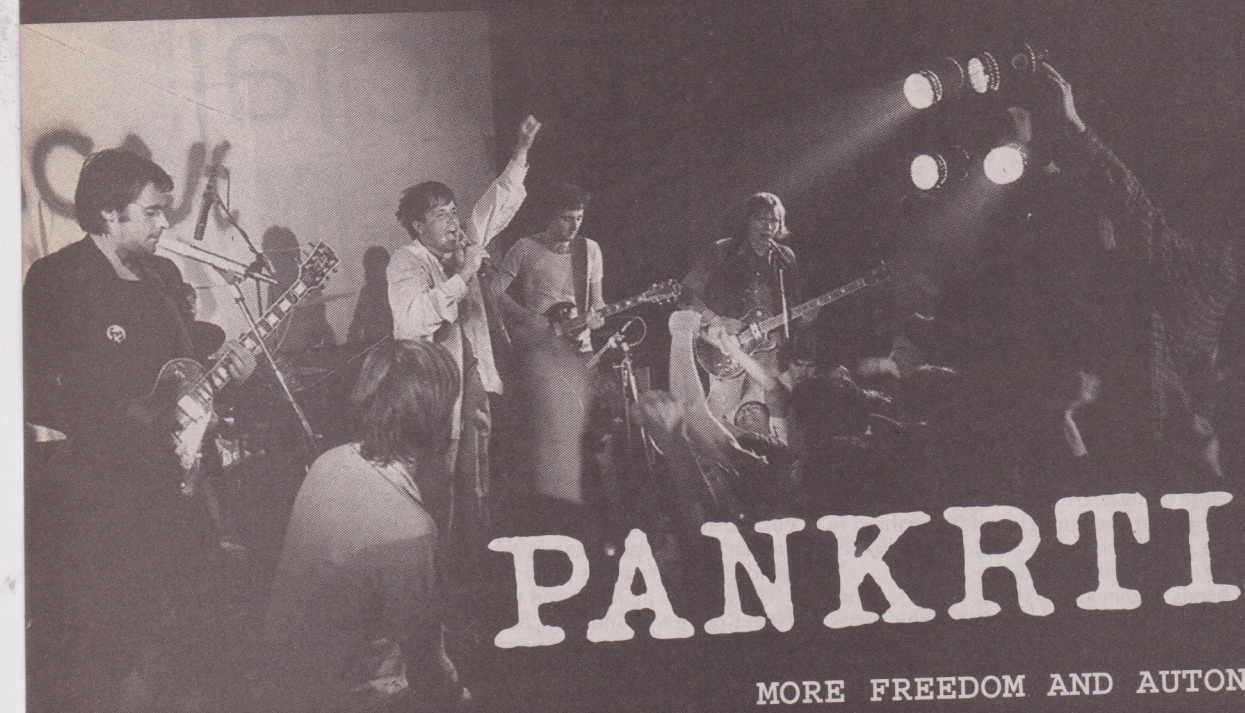
First of all, a big thank you to *MRR* for giving the bands and myself the opportunity to expose the magazine's global readership to this strange—and I daresay unique—phenomenon (at least within the "second (ex-socialist) world," for sure). But first of all, it's important that the bands speak for themselves—as they did originally with their songs and attitude. They contribute valuable details and perceptions of the scene and social context. I cannot but praise their individuality, autonomy, the lack of clichés or retro-embellishments; no internal jealousies and no generational exclusivities: we were all in it together, we were all bastard "Children of Socialism." I would like to dedicate these meager words to Brane Bitenc, the recently deceased singer and lyricist of the band of the same name: Otroci Socializma. Neither was he nor we were in it for showbiz glory, or mere ego-trips (not to mention money), but for self-made fun, free self-expression and a stiff middle finger to the system. Ironically in hindsight the system was still, as friend Boris of Sund rightly notices, better than what we have now.

But I don't think any of the SLO bands in this issue have a desire to go back to the past: we're all more or less clearly conscious that the criminal financial capitalist system that has swallowed Slovenia—and the rest of ex-Yugo too, along with the "socialist" block—rules ever stronger, even more so after the "crisis," as it is not hindered even by the illusory "competition" of real, existing "socialism." And it is taking the world, its environment and humanity to hell ever faster, including its "authoritarian" sidekicks from the once-red East. Anyone with any sense knows we have to invent mostly new solutions to make "another world that is possible" even remotely possible.

So, if I'm allowed to see any common message here, I'd like to think it would be just the opposite of some historic dogma or fixed prescription: just the same old Think For Yourself and Do It Yourself, individually and collectively, with the help of but *not* by the rules of the "(anti)social media" and the whole Virtual Big Brother and its overkill of infotainment, gadgets and games that isolate, limit and channel us. Hopefully this brief excursion into SLO punk history can contribute to a sense of local possibilities and local creativity—and the relevance of non-designed punk ethics in the fight against pre-fabricated consumerist entertainment. Maybe it will even get younger readers interested in where much of today's alternative *and* mainstream culture and music came from, and how and why that place and time was so productive. Even if—or rather, precisely because—it was not cluttered with nonstop information, a deluge of apps and pathologically narcissistic selfie-stimulating possibilities. Because, as the saying goes, those who don't know from whence they came, don't know where they're going.

But enough of this "sermon"—the ideology of "future" and "hope" is in my view one of the culprits of the mess we're in. Here, another voice from the SLO punk past may be of help: verses by the popular, first-post-Pankrti-wave band, Lublanski Psi (Ljubljana Dogs):
There's still hope for me. / But hope, I shit on thee.

—*Igor Vidmar*



PANKRTI

MORE FREEDOM AND AUTONOMY

"Pankrti"—the Slovenian word for illegitimate child. There is no better name the first Slovenian punk band could have thought of. Their first concert at Moste High School in Ljubljana on October, 18th, 1977, is officially considered the first punk concert in Yugoslavia. At the same time, punk was also starting to boil in Rijeka, Zagreb, Belgrade, and Pula. Punk and New Wave were at their peaks when Edvard Kardelj (1979), ideologist of Yugoslavian political settlement and autonomic socialism, and Marshal Josip Broz Tito (1980) died. It flared out.

It has been 35 years since Pankrti's single "Lublana je Bulana/Lepi in Prazni" was released. The tour with which they wanted to promote the release was postponed because of Kardelj's death. Only three months before Tito died, Pankrti released their first LP. Later they released five more LPs and three singles. They remained together for ten years and after six albums they finished their "last pogo in Ljubljana" in 1987 in front of a fully crowded Hala Tivoli (approx. 8,000 people). In 1988 they gathered again because of democratic changes in Yugoslavia, but went their own ways soon after. Only frontman Peter Lovšin remained musically active and became one of the most popular rock singers in Slovenia. No matter what turn he took in his solo career, there were always sparks of the restless Pankrti spirit in his eyes.

In 2007, Pankrti returned to the scene of the crime and rose up like a phoenix in front of a sold-out Hala Tivoli. On their ex-Yugoslavia tour Ivan Krall accompanied them on guitar, and this is what's recorded on their retrospective record NČ Se Ne Premakne, which also includes a DVD with the recording from the abovementioned Ljubljana concert.

Pankrti are still active. We sat down with founding members Peter Lovšin and Gregor Tomc, the men behind the lyrics and music of Pankrti, to recollect memories of those wild years. Introduction and interview by Igor Bašin-BiGor, music publicist and critic, and co-author of the movie Glasba je Časovna Umetnost: Pankrti - Dolgcajt (Music is the Art of Time: Pankrti - Dolgcajt).

Photos by Sinisa Lopojda, Tone Stojko, and Vojko Flegar.

MRR: How did you come to the decision to form a punk band?
Gregor Tomc: We had known each other for a long time. We constantly bumped into each other on campus and at the sports park of Slovan club at Kodeljevo in Ljubljana, but we became friends over music. When Peter mentioned that he wrote songs we went to his place and he played them to me. I read in *Time* and *Newsweek* about punk and instantly knew that Peter was the right one for it. There were two kinds of rock popular at that time—the hippie scene with 20-minute songs, which didn't interest us, and mainstream rock with Elton John and Queen, which we found boring. I thought that rock'n'roll was going to kick the bucket. There was otherwise relatively decent glitter rock, but it wasn't the right thing. Although that article was very pejoratively written and made fun of punk and punkers, we instantly knew, "This is it! This is the revolution of rock'n'roll!" Because there was no hope that any punk band would ever come to Yugoslavia, we had to form our own.

MRR: You divided your roles. Gregor traveled to London and Peter had the task of finding and forming a band.
Gregor: We divided the work Bolshevik-like. Peter had to form a band and go looking for people, and I went to London to see how things should be done. We had been to London before to buy records which weren't available in Yugoslavia. I traveled there from high school onwards. Traveling to London was not always special, but this time I had a good reason. It was 1977. I didn't see much. The most popular band I managed to see was 999. But I bought a lot of compilations, all three Sex Pistols singles, the first Clash single, and a bunch of fanzines and returned to Ljubljana with them.

MRR: How did the records you brought from London influence your early sound?
Peter Lovšin: They were a big inspiration for the first phase. We also found similar motives in lyrics and texts. Speed, terseness and striking force were of course most important in the beginning. At our first concert we played a song, which went like: "Upor, gremo v upor!" and it was based on "White Riot" by the Clash. We also played "Sympathy for the Devil" at that concert, David Bowie and Dylan. Plus two songs from my acoustic-era. "Porno Projektor" and "Bruhajno Vsi" (Puke Everybody) were my hippie view of the world. They were about themes that haunted us at that time, but also defined us.

These songs were from my high school phase. And very soon, after a few concerts, I realized that they were too different to what we were doing. My principal goal was to find musicians who could play, who don't have prejudices, and don't consent to only three chords. Of course, we wanted to do simple things, but even for simplicity you need knowledge. We wanted to have a band that would also be sexy. The goal was to play electrified folk. We both liked Dylan, the blues, Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Chuck Berry, and the Rolling Stones. We wanted to frame all of that to electrified rock'n'roll rebellion...
Gregor: It's rock'n'roll, which is intelligent and has something to say, but it's also entertaining. We were convinced that punk would become the popular music of that time. That it would be danced at on the dance floors. We never had a feeling that it's an alternative and that we should aspire to it. All the bands from the first punk generation were like this. In interacting with fans they wanted to establish an aesthetic ease. We really thought it was the popular

music of the future and we wanted to participate in it, to break down the boredom in which we lived.

MRR: The band was formed in late summer of 1977. In October you had your first concert.
Peter: About two weeks before the concert it was a rush. We skipped all summer, ha ha.
Gregor: Knowing the boss of the Union Socialistic Youth at Moste High School was very important: he set up the concert in the gym. You always had to work through somebody who was somehow connected to the state. There was no other way. You always had to get permission through political programs and at Moste High School we got it through the Union of Socialistic Youth. Nobody really knew what punk was. They thought it was going to be another school dance. Punk didn't mean anything then. No communistic party, youth, or media knew what it was.
Peter: For a long time after our concert there were no concerts at the high school. Something actually happened. The gym was surprisingly crammed. People brought their own drinks and they smoked and drank in the gym. The concert was absolutely too loud for the standards of that time. An unusual atmosphere was created. There were already ten or twenty people coming to our rehearsals and it was expected: something was going to happen. What, even we didn't know. That night we were very aggressive, but when we felt a real sound system behind us, it meant freedom.
Gregor: I was sure that that was going to be our first and last concert, but a funny thing happened. There were media people at the concert. From Radio Študent, *Stop* magazine, national radio and television. These were people who were critical and thought for themselves; and they published reviews after the concert. If everybody had been silent then, if there had been no public response, everything would have been concealed. But the band became public this way, and legalized. As early as the next day we were invited to Radio Študent, where we had our second concert. After that we were invited to Belgrade by Študent Cultural Centre (ŠKUC). This is the way the band survived, because some people had the guts to say, "This is interesting" in public. That this was some kind of rock'n'roll, which was non-existent here. That it was innovation, which also had aesthetic value.

MRR: Concerts followed, in fact there were more and more of them, which, because of compulsory military service, affected changes in the band.
Peter: We practically formed a band for one concert; a band without big plans, really. We never actually thought about what would come of it. For some it became too much. The bass player Jure Kraševec was a chemical technology student and he wanted to finish his studies. We replaced him with Bore Krambergar, who was in a support group at our first concert. There was Slavc Colnari on drums, and Mitja Prijatelj and Bogo Pretnar on guitars. When Bogo left, we turned to Dušan Žiberna, who was already one of the best rock guitarists in Yugoslavia. He played with Sedem Svetlobnih Let and Buldožer. We continued our work with much joy, we were elevated by the desire to make music. After Dolgcajt Mitja left, Bogo returned in his place. He stayed in Pankrti until the end, like Slavc, Bore and me. Bore was missing only one time when our live record *Svoboda '82* was recorded in Dom Svobode in Šentivid, Ljubljana. When he was in the army his substitute was Matjaž Gantar from Lublanski Psi.

MRR: In the summer of 1978 you set out to Gorizia, across the border into neighboring Italy, to record your first single, which was released by Ljubljana ŠKUC.
Peter: Igor Vidmar was behind that. He organized the recording. We didn't care where we were going. We were hungry for recording. It was the time of the Basketball World Cup in Manila, which was an extenuating circumstance, and we recorded songs very fast. We were in a hurry to see the finals between Yugoslavia and the USSR. It all happened in one afternoon and evening—the trip back home took longer. We were held and interrogated at the border for seven hours. We spent as much time recording and watching basketball as we did explaining what we were doing in Italy.

MRR: The single release was met with a wide response.
Peter: Yes, the response was very strong. The single practically sold out in no time, which was confirmation that we were on the right path. With songs "Lublana je Bulana" and "Tovar'ši, Jest Vam ne Verjamem" a flash of wit happened within me. I was making different songs by then. Since then the formula was that each song has to have a direct message, which strikes directly with the title, and that we say practically everything in the chorus and straight in your face.

MRR: The single release was soon followed by a LP release offer by state record label ZKP RTV Ljubljana.
Gregor: It was science-fiction for me. None of us could have imagined that. Things were moving in an unlikely direction and the media wrote about it and everything came as a surprise. And when editor Dušan Velkavrh invited us, I couldn't understand it—I understood later. A pretense of autonomic socialism was that responsibility was delegated downwards. The Party delegated, let's say, somebody in ZKP who they thought was smart enough to judge what is right and what is wrong. In short, The Party didn't directly interfere with who was recording and who was not. It was up to the person who was at a certain position—if they were upright and brave enough and had enough of a civil attitude to live through everything.

MRR: Igor Vidmar was your collaborator, and at the same time he established himself as a punk ideologist on the scene.
Gregor: The role of Igor Vidmar was enormous. I mentioned the response after our first concert, which helped punk become a public phenomenon. Igor Vidmar absolutely helped the most. Our acquaintances were limited to waitresses in bars. In fact, we didn't know anybody. We were actually non-persons, nobody in social life. Igor Vidmar knew everybody. He knew people in The Party, in ŠKUC, he worked at Radio Študent and the national radio. He is an incredible

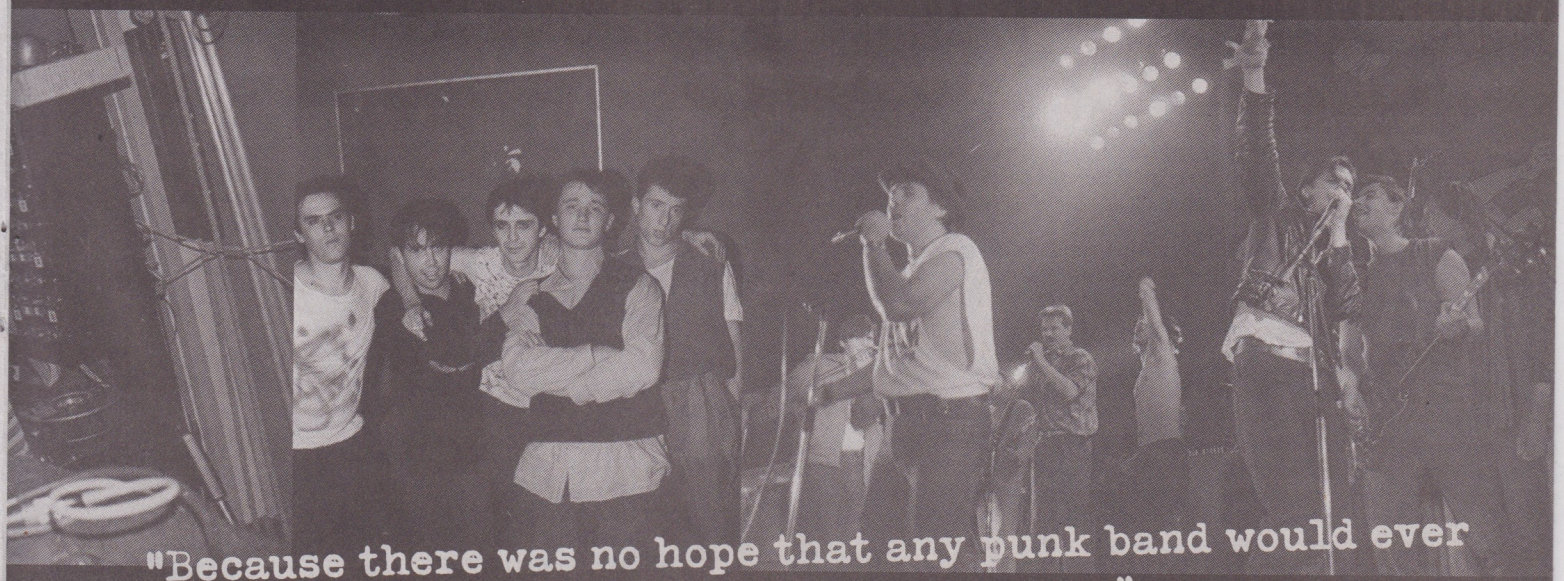
person. Once, I said that I wouldn't be surprised if I saw him marching with Slovenian communist boss France Popit through Ljubljana's main street Titova Ulica. He actually knew everybody. He was a public person and as such he made Pankrti public. He made it possible to get our first single through ŠKUC. Without him it would have been hard to negotiate with the record label ZKP RTV Ljubljana. I also can't forget about his constant media fights he really liked to enter into with the punk enemies. So he profiled the punk scene, which also had other opposite consequences: the dogmatization of punk and the search for enemies at any price. However, all of Yugoslavia was becoming aware of punk's existence.

MRR: The title of the LP *Dolgcajt* (Boredom) was explicitly intentional and punky.
Gregor: Absolutely. On the one hand we picked it from a typical vocabulary, which was used in our punk experience of the world: boredom, no future. It agreed with Slovenian and Yugoslavian circumstances, such that we immediately identified with this attitude. Ljubljana was a synonym for boredom. On the other, a lot of things happened while we were recording the record. I remember how we walked around Slovan with Peter and talked about the title. I asked him what he thought about *Dolg as* and he answered: "Damn, so much is happening to us. I'm really not bored right now... Let's sacrifice it for another idea!" The title of the record, as well as all lyrics on *Dolgcajt*, was intentional. In contrast to other intimate lyrics that prevailed in music in that time, we talked about how we felt in the context of life. In that sense we were a political band and didn't talk about our lyrical problems, but about problems with the community in which we live.
Peter: "Dolgcajt" was a cover that I made from the Stooges songs "No Fun". We played it at our first concert. We soon stopped playing it because it was very straining. But the title stayed with me, and it was a consequence of playing and concerts. It referred to our city, which was defined by boredom.

MRR: You mentioned the civil attitude of an editor. Who interfered with your lyrics anyway?
Gregor: Of course. This was something you took for granted. We lived in an authoritarian regime in which you had to make compromises if you wanted to do anything. If you wanted to record in the studio, you had to sign a contract with the state. If you wanted to perform you had to report to a police station. You had to have contacts with the Union of Socialistic Youth. In short, the state was everywhere and the state was also at the label. When we came to the label they immediately said it's not best to sing about anarchism. Or, that certain songs had to be changed. We went from verse to verse and talked about them. It was the same at the magazines—for instance, when publishing our lyrics in *Problemi* magazine. It wasn't pleasant, but we never felt it as something very fatal.

In contrast to communists, we didn't believe in the magical power of the word. They believed that they came to authority with words and if wrong words were spoken, that they would lose it. To us other things mattered more. Concerts, a solid life attitude, that kids listened to records but also experienced sound and lyrics live. For us it wasn't disastrous if it was written "a bomb" or "a cake" in one verse. When you came from these negotiations you felt a little dirty, but in the end you said to yourself: "Without these compromises there would be no record. Period." Slovenian punk wouldn't exist if people hadn't made very pragmatic and, in my opinion, reasonable compromises.
Peter: We were in the system so much that we knew what barbed wires we would have to go through if we want to record and release a LP which would be radical and say what we wanted at the same time. To us it wasn't about political action and we never wanted to be just a political band. First of all, we wanted to make rock'n'roll and also say something. We didn't take it as a problem when people at the label discovered some verses and complained about publishing lyrics on the record. When we reconciled it, there was a problem with a song, "Po itnice Na Morju," in which I mentioned "otok goli" (after Goli Otok, which means barren island and was a political island prison in Yugoslavia). My mentioning this preoccupied them, so I said, "OK, then it can be 'costa del sol' if you want!" It's not that we didn't consider ourselves artists because of this, nor did we feel that artistic freedom was taken away from us.

MRR: You were also met with a "commission of trash," which placed taxes on *Dolgcajt*.
Gregor: I think that there weren't political reasons behind that, but something far worse—deep cultural conservatism of people who decide what is good and what is bad music. In the name of absolute knowledge they decided what is more or less worthy in music. They put a sticker on a record to define it as trashy



"Because there was no hope that any punk band would ever come to Yugoslavia, we had to form our own"

commercial goods, for which taxes had to be paid, which made records expensive. And we fell in this category of thrash. I admit, I was very proud that we were proclaimed as trash. It was the biggest possible praise and recognition. Later I found out that there were two reasons for the decision of this fee. The first was because of the lyrical nature, saying that some lyrics were not linguistically perfected enough. And the second was that construction was bad and lyrics incomprehensible—which is a paradox. If the lyrics are bad it's better that way—that way they can't be understood!

MRR: How important was the release of *Dolgcajt*?
Peter: For the band and also for the scene itself, it was important as a debut record, but I think the main shock happened before, with the first uprising of punk, with the first punk concerts, which were echoing from mouth to mouth. At the release of the single "Lublana je Bulana/Lepi in Prazni" there were a lot of new bands on the scene. It all unwound very fast. Kuzle and Šund came from Idrija, Ljubljana had Ljubljana 78, Buldogi, Berlinski Zid, Lublanski Psi, and Grupa 92, and in Metlika there was Indust-Bag. The real strike came before *Dolgcajt*.

MRR: Slovenian punk was different to Croatian and Serbian. It was more political and also more radical.
Gregor: It was sharper, because after the first punk generation, Radio Študent started to radicalize this thing even more. The Slovenian scene in comparison to Zagreb or Belgrade was much less artistic and much more political. Punk in Zagreb turned into New Wave before it even became punk. The Belgrade punk scene was very interesting but distinctly artistic. I think every scene found out alone until where it can provoke. The Slovenian context was by far the most tolerant in Yugoslavia, that's why we dared the most, what brought the most radical reactions of authorities through Naci Pank affairs in 1981 and 1982.

MRR: By all means punk launched and moved social happenings in society. It also attracted an intellectual and academic community.
Gregor: It was about yet another typical Slovenian phenomenon. A generation of new left-wingers, who had been through the turmoil of the student movement (1968-1972) and were looking for a substitute for it, thinking very naively that punk was the catalyst of a new revolutionary situation, that it would pull the trigger of some new radical movement. They searched for sub-politics. That's why Slavoj Žižek said that punk is a symptom of the decomposition of autonomic relations—but he forgot that punk is also music and that you can't just talk about punk, as it has consequences on social situations. They expected punk could be used for political purposes. Of course it didn't happen because expectations were totally unreal. They didn't take music seriously enough. We were very skeptical about all politics; and we were so provocative to politics because we were so indifferent to it. It wasn't the worst thing to say that you are beautiful and empty in a time when everybody wanted you to be engaged. Or, that you don't believe in comrades. It was a provocation because they were so politicized, and not because we had some political agenda. Also new left-wingers had one, so we found ourselves between the hammer and the anvil. On the one side was The Party, which expected the young generation to activate itself; on the other side the new left-wingers, who expected punk to activate itself against The Party. But we didn't care about the politics. We disturbed Radio Študent and orthodox people in The Party alike. Maybe we had the most radical attitude that was possible at the time. Its radicalism was in us saying, "We don't take politics as a serious partner. We are not interested in it. We are only interested in the individual." That's why ZSMS could only use Laibach for this purpose. But what to do with punk, it didn't know. Punk namely wasn't an organization. It was a bunch of anarchoid individuals, which were interested in playing. But Laibach were already useful for that.

MRR: Are Pankrti kids of the '70s?
Gregor: We were a product of the '70s and the music that we listened to at that time. Everybody comes from some tradition, which comes from a place and time in which they lived. You cannot come from some other tradition, unless you attach yourself to it only nostalgically and romantically. In this place and time we actually lived fully with music. We were disturbed by artificiality in music in the mid '70s and hippie oddness got on our nerves. On the other hand we were also disturbed by self-satisfaction. For me it felt like almost the end of the world when I heard Bob Dylan's *Nashville Skyline*. We were interested in making critical, interesting and still entertaining music, music for dancing and fun. I never experienced punk any other way. It was a continuation of the brightest tradition of rock'n'roll. Our punk is punk of the '70s, like Sex Pistols were punk of '70s. We have no connection to hardcore. For hardcorers we were the Beatles, so irrelevant. But this is good. Every generation has its own aesthetic. It's important that it's coming from the inside and not dictated by institutions.

MRR: With time, after your second album, you moved away from orthodox punk and became a vigorous rock band.
Gregor: First generation Ljubljana punkers were very relaxed, almost hippie-like I could say. Everyone wanted to do their own thing. Everybody wanted to be unique, innovative, recognized, different from the rest. Every punk band from Ljubljana or Slovenian and Yugoslavian was unique then. All this different music was held together by the punk attitude. But aesthetically bands were very different. From KuZle to Lublanski Psi, from Berlinski Zid to Indust-Bag. Very different bands. Each had its own aesthetic cosmos. The first generation of punks was made up of non-conformists. We came into punk from other music and used it for our expression. We didn't have untouchable relics, and on every record we tried to do something new. In this way we were maybe very different from generations that came after us, when punk was already a tradition. Important change happened; what likes to happen in Slovenia—institutions were established which watched over what is real punk and what is not real punk. Through Radio Študent and ŠKUC, punk was run as a doctrine of sub-political attitude. We didn't care about it. Every record was a world in itself. And maybe with time we started to talk more about us and less about community. With time I realized it's not about changing the world anymore, but about changing oneself in the world. I was also interested in politics, however I wasn't hot on changing Yugoslavia, but more on how to win more autonomy. And Pankrti were part of this project. More freedom for me.

MRR: Could you say that Pankrti came more from rock than from punk?
Peter: Look, orthodox punk is one sleeve of punk and punk is the sleeve of rock'n'roll. We came out of what everybody brought to the band. The guitar players came out of blues and hard rock traditions, I from folk, blues, Lou Reed, Rolling Stones, music of the 1960s. The Kinks were my big band, and the Troggs. Absolutely always Ramones, Sex Pistols, the Clash, and the beginning of Patti Smith. Punk and punk rockers meant a blood infusion of rock'n'roll.

MRR: Slovenia accepted you more and more as a rock band, but in your guest appearances in the rest of Yugoslavia then you still represented the peak of punk.

"Every generation has its own aesthetic. It's important that it's coming from the inside and not dictated by institutions"

Peter: Of course. For instance we were practically forbidden in Sarajevo until 1985. Our second album *Državni Ljubimci* (State Lovers) was differently understood in Zagreb and Belgrade than in Ljubljana.

MRR: What was the difference?
Peter: *Državni Ljubmci* was album of the year according to the Yugoslavian magazine *Džuboks*. But criticism and the scene in Ljubljana were always more orthodox. Maybe it comes from the fact that we had such political personas, as were Edvard Kardelj and Stane Dolanc, who were architects of hard ideology of social self-government and our path to socialism. Similarly some critics in Ljubljana built that hard path; the one that is the only, right, saving path of punk and rock'n'roll.
Gregor: Punk is very urban music and needs a large amount of youth in urban centers, where they can anonymously hang out and create autonomic attitude. Slovenia is small. It doesn't have many urban centers. There's too much familiarity and not enough anonymity. There's not enough space for urban culture. In our whole career, all ten years, we mainly performed in bigger cities: Belgrade, Zagreb, Rijeka, Niš, Skopje. The last fortress we conquered was Sarajevo. In this large centre of orthodox communism our concert was organized under the initiative of Emir Kusturica. Yugoslavia existed as a common cultural place. Sports were functioning absolutely as a bind on territories for the whole stale, like a cultural institution. We watched the best Yugoslavian basketball and best Yugoslavian football, and every week Ljubljana's Olimpija played games. There was film production. Common television culture was created. And the same happened to rock'n'roll. There was exchange between cities. Thing were happening from Triglav to Vardar and happenings could be simultaneously followed. All labels were forcing bands onto the broader Yugoslav market. This is the biggest loss of the Yugoslavian break up.

MRR: What was your influence on others?
Gregor: I could hardly say that Pankrti influenced other bands. They influenced them maybe in a way by showing the possibility of innovative authorial music production.

How I met Pankrti
by Samo Ambroži .
My first encounter with Pankrti was in the summer of 1977 when we wanted to go to Kino Triglav and we heard music from the school basement. We checked what band was playing. We weren't used to such bands in the neighborhood. When we came to the basement we saw some of our older acquaintances. They were a generation ahead of us. Peter, whom we knew from the nearby street invited us in and said, "Boys, you can be here for a few songs. We will continue playing." Immediately shock followed. We were used to bands like Pink Floyd, Deep Purple, and the Grateful Dead. Here were popular Bijelo Dugme, Drugi Na in and similar, who all played more tranquil or they were more tranquil on the stage. But Peter threw himself around the floor, imitated masturbation, yelled. Every third word was a curse, English, Slovene, everything. On the whole, they shocked us. I simply thought that he was joking around, that he was trying to surprise us. We stayed for three songs, then left. After a few months a friend who went to Moste High School told us that those people from the basement actually play, that their name is Pankrti and that they will have a concert at the school. It was October 1977 and three of us went together to the concert. There were around one to two hundred people there. Among others I remember Stane Sušnik, renowned music critic, Igor Vidmar and others. Most of the people were from high school. Even the principal was there. They played songs we didn't know then. They were from the Clash, Sex Pistols, Stooges, David Bowie and similar. In the middle of one song Peter threw his shoe from the stage, which hit Stane Sušnik in the head. Peter was yelling. People were in shock. Nobody said anything, and when the song was over nobody applauded. Nobody did absolutely anything. What a shock it was is told by the fact that there was not another dance at that school for a long time. Simple reason: the principal didn't like it. Peter cursed everything possible. This was our first encounter with Pankrti and punk in Slovenia.

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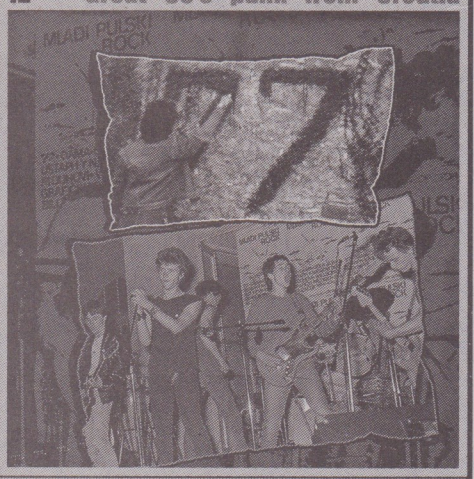

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92 is representative of the first generation of Ljubljana's punk after Pankrti. Ne! Records' publishing of Slike Preteklosti *(Images of Past) grasps the active period of 92 between 1978 and 1983. It discloses that they are "one of most the most promising bands of Yugoslavian new wave and punk, who ended as (maybe) one of the most underrated bands," as is (quite substantially) written in the announcement of the record.*

92 was formed in the womb of Yugoslavian punk, Ljubljana, at Kodeljevo, in the same neighborhood as Pankrti. They made their live debut at the Moste POP '79 festival in Moste pri Komendi and soon became the new hope of the Slovenian scene. The first punk phase, which is immortalized with recordings on the compilation Novi Punk Val '78-'80 *("Kontroliram Misli" and "Videti Jih) as well as on the single "Od Šestih do Dveh/ Tujci" for state label ZKP RTV Ljubljana (Od Šestih do Dveh, T"ujci), came to an end in the beginning of 1980, when singer Aljoša Zupančič, guitarist Matej Sršen, bassist Marko Banič, and drummer Bojan Oset were joined by keyboard player Brane Plemenitaš.*

92 was one more victim of compulsory military service. Two members had to put on military uniforms during the band's most prolific period. After their return, the other two had to leave for the army. The band was in coercive creative hibernation for almost two years, but all this time their burning heads was cooking ideas and plans for the future. In complete formation, they had only two weeks time to learn new and old songs for their performance at Novi Rock festival in 1982, which was the peak for every new, young band. The recording from that performance is on Side B of the retrospective edition of Slike Preteklosti. *The third phase of this penetrating band, which wasn't accepted by the core of Ljubljana's punk, is revealed with the enclosed single of four demo bonuses recorded in June 1982 in the basement of Radio Študent. They were called popsters and reproached with (new) romanticism. Opponents were sulking and bore grudges, which still stink like vigorous Slovenian envy. But after hearing never-released recordings in the last third of* Slike Preteklosti, *many reproaches evaporate as historically unfounded. This record puts things in order, least for those of us who didn't experience those wild times at the end of the '70s and the beginning of the '80s first hand.*

I sat down with the main lyricist and guitarist Matej Sršen and bassist Marko Bannič to clear up the view of that time even more. Where else than at Kodeljevo, the part of Ljubljana where 92 formed? Interview and introduction by Igor Bašin.

MRR: You called yourself Termiti in the beginning. Did you know there was a punk band with the same name in Rijeka?

Marko: Yes, but before punk we had a band and we called ourselves Termiti. We listened to and played the Beatles, Rolling Stones, Chuck Berry, the Animals and the rest of rock'n'roll. Guitars were played. If you played guitar you were a hotshot. But if you had a band, you were a top dog. At some point we started to write our own songs, which coincided with the arrival of punk rock. It was well timed for us. We didn't master playing well enough to play something more pretentious. Some songs were made, which could be marked as punk today—very rudimental, trashing, simple and full of energy. Then on Igor Vidmar's radio show on Radio Študent, we heard there was already a band with the name Termiti in Rijeka. They were performing and recording already.

Matej: We played in the basement on Povšetova Ulica. That's why we called ourselves Termiti. I am under the Beatles' influence. We liked to play them over and over, like the rest of rock'n'roll. I don't recall how the name change happened. We just discovered that Termiti already exists, that we could not perform under this name. We renamed ourselves 92 after the police telephone number. They called us Ansambel 92 (Ensemble 92) and Grupa 92 (Group 92), but we were only 92. From this place where we are doing this interview you can see the balcony where we played the Beatles all morning.

Marko: On the fourth floor...we carried all the equipment to the balcony.

Matej: It was heard by Kette Murn primary school.

Marko: The whole park had a party the whole morning.

Petek, 10. septembra Foto: Vincenc Filipčič

MRR: Kodeljevo was noted for a bunch of bands. What made this quarter a virtual breeding ground of punk, and rock in general, in Ljubljana?

Marko: Pankrti created this reputation, just because they were from here. They rehearsed in many different places through Kodeljevo, for example, on the ground floor of a music school. Because they were too loud they had to leave. A little later on they rehearsed at the shrine of Grad Kodeljevo (Kodeljevo Castle). I remember walking past and a big racket was coming out of it. At that time we didn't even know it was possible to play so loud. This reputation of Kodeljevo was created by them. Especially Pero with his lyrics. We are from the edge of Kodeljevo, which was the part of town with a mixture of council flats and middle class, where we belonged. We were from professorial families.

MRR: A feature of punk was that it joined the working and middle class.

Marko: From a social point of view it was very mixed. There was no strong distinction. We were hanging together all the time.

Matej: My view of this is more ironic. I never felt like a punker, especially in this classic sense as people imagine today in the year of 2014. I just created music that I liked. In the years of 1977 and 1978 we were just rock'n'rollers. Not rockers, but rock'n'rollers. I still like rockabilly and blues.

Marko: We didn't lean on studio Beatles. We liked their Hamburg-era and the period when they played songs from others. We never played: "She Loves You" but rockabilly songs.

MLADINA, št. 29, 30.9.1982, 41

POSTERJU OB ROB

92

MRR: Punk was the third wave of elementary rock'n'roll, after all. It went back to its primal form.
Marko: When we played at Moste Festival for the first time in 1979 we had a sound that could be compared to raucous punk. But all the iconography, behavior, and dressing up wasn't our thing. Music was more important to us.
Matej: After the year of 1980 our music transmuted into some other mixture, which didn't really fit into a punk scene. More than socially committed, our songs came out of distress.

MRR: 92 had a special status within the scene. Among other things you were called popsters.
Matej: But we *were* popsters.

MRR: This was the time when disco music was booming too. If there was conflict in the rock field between old rockers and punkers, then on the wider musical field there was conflict between rockers and Travolta's.
Matej: I went to the discotheque to matinees, to Stopoteka and Šiška. I was too young to go out in the evening. On Saturdays it was from 4-8 pm in Stopoteka and from 5-9 pm in Šiška. I would like to say that I was listening to everything from Ray Charles to all sorts of New Wave performers like Devo, Gang of Four, and the Stranglers. In these I picked up the substrate for my own music. I can't say I was a punker and that I was fighting against something and slandered, because this simply isn't true. I was just making music.
Marko: 92 wasn't so heavily hostile to the system. For us punk was one way of rock'n'roll. Recently I read an interview with members of the Sex Pistols, who rejected assertions about their engagement and subversion. "We were just kids who wanted to play rock'n'roll. Our world was music and not whatever connected with ideology," he said. It was very similar with us.
Matej: Luckily we all lived on Povšetova Street, in the beginning. We didn't have any ambitions that something would come out of this. We only enjoyed music and got along together very well. We still do. We were formed out of it. What happened later, was that we were presented as a punk band... when you are sixteen or seventeen years old you have enough energy; and we tried to make songs that would be an upgrade to rock'n'roll.
Marko: Mainly all bands who had rock mojo in themselves were drawn into punk because it was the most current style. Rockers were already a little bit older and were into guitar solos. We didn't want to belong there. Especially when you are so young. You had to come out with something new, something that will make an impression.

MRR: Although you weren't from working class families, you had one of the first hits with a working class theme, "Od Šestih do Dveh" (From Six Until Two).
Matej: [laughs] I wrote this one because in my second year of high school I had a mandatory internship in a factory.
Marko: ...which convinced you never to work in a factory.
Matej: When I saw and experienced work in a factory I wrote this song. Today I can say that luckily we went into the ska rhythm. We didn't nag about the orthodox punk sound. We chose a more humorous version. I like that a lot, and after thirty-five years it's still very topical.
Marko: We dealt with a poor variant of working on a production line with humor, as Matej said. We all experienced that. We worked through a student employment agency in warehouses where we shifted crates of potatoes, fruits and vegetables. This experience was not so nice that you would want to repeat it all your life.

MRR: How did you get into music anyway? There was *Džuboks* magazine and Radio Študent. And *Stop* covered popular music very well...
Marko: There were lots of Jugoton issues.

MRR: You think licensed issues?
Marko: Yes. Some records turned up here very quickly. They were quite cheap so we could buy everything that was at least barely interesting. Records and cassettes were circulating between us. It was easy to get to music. Like today, when you download it from the internet. We were in touch with what was happening around the world.
Matej: I had the strongest connection with this music through Gorizia in neighboring Italy and La Discoteque store there. There I bought my first Dr. Feelgood LP, *Down by the Jetty*.

MRR: They were in Ljubljana in 1978.
Matej: This was my first concert in Hala Tivoli. Dr. Feelgood is for me still the top band. Unfortunately I didn't see Wilko Johnson, who already stopped playing with them, but the concert had a very big influence on me anyway. For me this is still one of the best bands that I heard.
Marko: This was a fantastic concert.

MRR: Soon after them the Stranglers came to Ljubljana. A lot of bands of that era had keyboards, including you. How big was the influence of the Stranglers and Buldožer on the other side?
Matej: I would hardly talk about Buldožer, which I did listen to, but I channeled our keyboard player Brane towards the playing of the Stranglers' keyboard player. I liked their music a lot. I tried to show him how this could sound with us. As rock'n'rollers and rockabillies we climbed into something that was soon called New Wave. And all this because we included keyboards, which were not normally used, but with Brane's very good playing skills, they overgrew the simple foundation. They took over a big part in harmonies.
Marko: Buldožer used a classic Hammond. We considered them a party band. Their lyrics were fine, but we didn't musically imitate them.

MRR: I didn't imply you were imitating them. It is interesting that almost every second band of that era had keyboards, which gave punk and New Wave a different dimension.
Matej: If you played with two guitars, bass, and drums you might be considered punk. But if you also had keyboards you were New Wave. It was such a weird partition. Keyboard was very important in our music. The sounds were incorporated in a multifaceted way into the structure of our songs.
Marko: We were a bit too early...a little later synths came out. I think we drew out the maximum from classic organs with the help of some effects. Great stuff came out of it.

MRR: While we already talked about instruments I was interested in how you got them? Stories about how bands put together drums from washing powder cartoon boxes are known... Guitars were played...

...kega v Londonu, pa se kaj se do nasio...«
ZORAN VLAJIĆ

postopek razglasitve za mrtve.
TOMAŽ GORENC

da sem avtomat
da sem avtomat...

POPOSKOP

● NEKAJ SE DOGAJA

Grupa 92 — primer domačega punka

Matej: …through transistors. I made my first electric guitar alone. I took two aluminum door parts, went to a model carpenter and had them cut out the shape of a guitar. Then I went to Centromerkur and bought magnets, which were sold on the first floor.

MRR: How long did this guitar play?

Matej: For quite some time. Until we were in the basement.

Marko: It was possible to buy Czech and East German instruments. Melodija made them. Trading had opened at that time. Instruments were sold in Centromerkur and also in two other shops in Ljubljana. So we got around. Soon you could find also a bit better Fender and Gibson copies. Matej still has this wonderful guitar that was top at that time.

Matej: In the beginning I had a semi-acoustic guitar Melodija. Mare had a red East German Muzima.

MRR: Your first concert was in May 1979 at festival Pop Moste pri Komendi, about twenty kilometers out of Ljubljana. This event is considered to be the turning point when the scene got divided into rockers and punkers.

Marko: Rivalry started then. It exposed what you liked more. Maybe we were more into punk rock then, which was heard there and was over.

Matej: At that concert everything was mixed. We played first. If I remember right, after us were Lublanski Psi or Ljubljana 78. Paraf were badmouthing us, but in a benevolent way. They were joking with us. Then singer-songwriter Aleksander Jež played. It was mix of everything. It was positive for us to play for the first time, and on such a big stage. We found out how it felt.

Marko: How you have to play.

Matej: How you have to hear yourself through the monitors, which weren't even on then.

Marko: They were still setting up the sound system during our performance and we were guinea pigs. We were on at two and, even today, I remember sunburns on my neck. But we have a historical note behind us; that we played at this festival, on a big stage, at a big event and from them our path went only up. And so it was.

Matej: A concert in a canteen of Študentsko Naselje followed.

Marko: We were the supporting act for Pankrti, which was a strong validation for us. We felt we were worth something.

Matej: But the peak was definitely Novi Rock '82.

Marko: Novi Rock was phenomenal. There was good energy at the concert, what can be heard also on recordings. This was our last larger concert.

MRR: For this concert you had only fourteen days to prepare and rehearse, because Marko returned from the army after being away for a year.

Marko: Serving in the army fucked us up. Two of us were older by one year. In 1980 the first two left for the army and when they came out we were together for about a month. Then we, the younger two, had to go. By the time I came back the rest had already made some new songs and diligently rehearsed. I had two weeks to learn everything and I succeeded. We went to Novi Rock as professed stars. We were highly ranked because we released an album in the meantime.

MRR: How did you come to release the single in 1980? Igor Vidmar was certainly involved.

Matej: Of course. He's signed as a producer on the single. We recorded songs at Radio Študent. Then we went to sign the contract at ZKP, and after signing they published the single. We thought it was wonderful. But we didn't dwell on it too much. We didn't lobby or force it either. It just happened.

Marko: Musicians make music, managers and producers take care that it is recorded and put on the market. It happened to us through Vidmar. How he became the voice of this scene and succeeded to plant it in this establishment is another story, and we were part of it.

MRR: What did you feel about being on *Stop*'s pops chart?

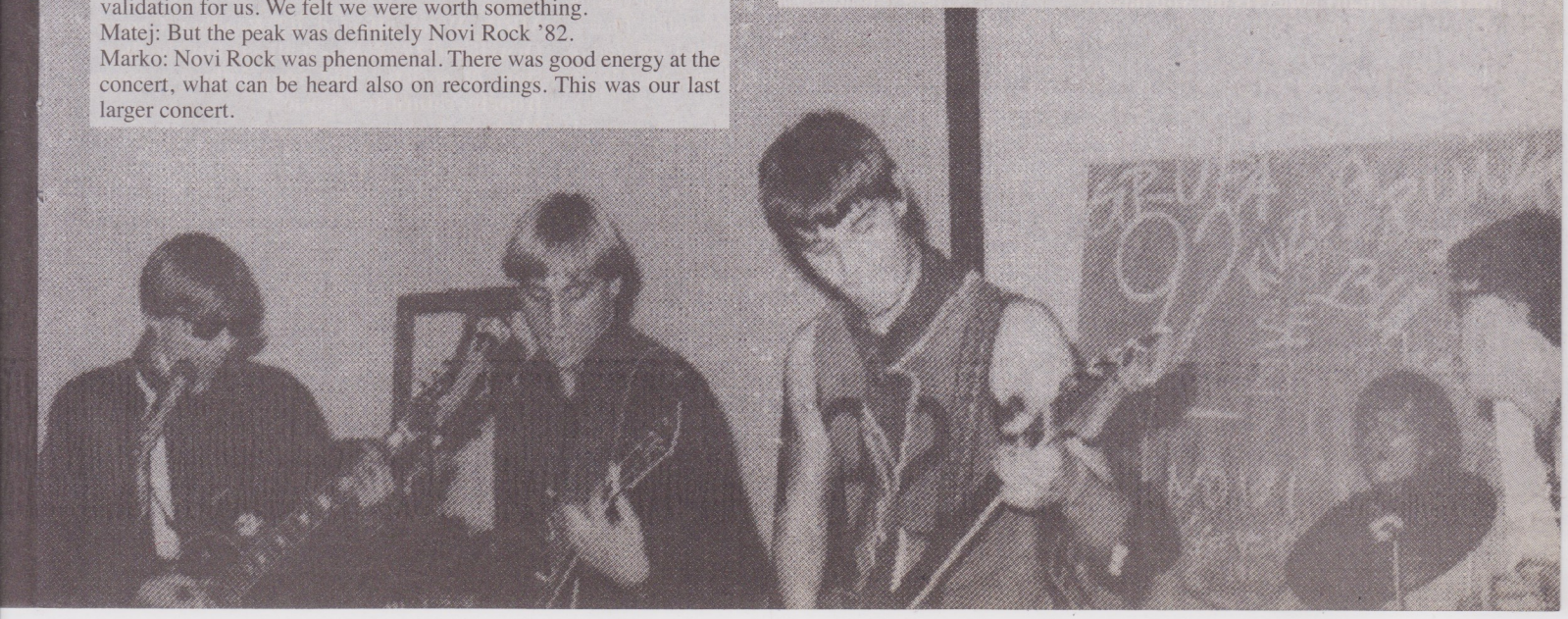
Marko: We chuckled.

Matej: Splendid! We beat Blondie. [laugh]

MRR: Chris Bohn wrote about this single in *Melody Maker*. This was one of the earliest records in British press about Yugoslavian punk and New Wave.

Marko: It was about a certain individual, who came to Ljubljana at a certain moment, heard what was played and was surprised. Then he wrote something nice about it. Because of the impression we made on him we didn't become an export product. We were a local band, Ljubljana's band.

MRR: On Radio Študent, apart from Igor Vidmar, there were a whole bunch of people who made sure that punk and New Wave were played on the air: for instance, Marjan Ogrinc, Peter Barbarič, and Leon Magdalenc. How did you see these individuals who created the look of Slovenian punk and New Wave through the media?



Skupina 92

Matej: If somebody showed support to us we were very satisfied. But we didn't connect with anybody or have somebody for an ideologist. We followed them on Radio Študent.
Marko: This circle was very important for the promotion. Promoters who liked our stuff and could get it on the radio, on an album or in the media, were important. We thought they were good guys. Stane Sušnik who got us on TV in Slovenia on the *Pop Godba Show*, was one such person, for instance. He looked for talent, something fresh and new and tried to show it on TV.

MRR: What bands were you in contact with, or play shows with?
Marko: Very closely with no one.
Matej: With no one, because we were...
Marko: ...popsters. (laughs)
Matej: Because we differed from everything.

MRR: Were you troubled by it?
Matej: Never. You can understand from the beginning of this interview that we didn't belong to the scene. Already in books and articles that were released later we weren't identified with this punk scene. We were always something extra, something special. We don't have conflicts with this scene but also no connection. The only connection is that we played in that time and that we played our own music.
Marko: Sometimes you get the feeling that this punk scene was like a guild.
Matej: Like a party you have to be faithful too.
Marko: It's doesn't work like this. All that counts is whether you make music or not.

MRR: How many concerts did you have?
Matej: Impossible to say. We never counted them.
Marko: Not many. There were no pubs and clubs with music every night. If you have a concert every week you progress faster, technically and musically. We lacked this. More performances would mean better playing. I'm sorry for that.

MRR: Disco FV?
Matej: After that it was nothing. Only obscure places like Borovnica.
Marko: There were micro areas, in Črnomelj, Idrija, Metlika. Every one of them had its local public of about fifty people. You could do ten shows in the surrounding areas, then return to Ljubljana where everything was concentrated. In Celje and Maribor there was already a local scene that wasn't part of punk or the rock'n'roll that we played. It was different.
Matej: Promoters collected everything that was active in Slovenia. Those weren't targeted concerts. There were no single concerts but some kind of festivals. That's why all kinds of different genres played together. Performances were very short too. In Celje, at a festival in Golovec we finished and left the stage after five songs. Singer-songwriter Jani Kovačič followed.

MRR: Did you ever think about a LP?
Marko: For a LP album you need enough songs. We would need ten or twelve songs for it. We worked all the time and when we made something new, we eliminated old material from the set because it appeared childish to us. For a LP you have to lock yourself in the studio and throw out songs. This wasn't our style. We were regularly creating, little by little and put older stuff into an archive.
Matej: In 1983 we were pretty finished. We knew we couldn't go record, and that nobody would publish it. Now that an album was published in Sweden it looks like a miracle to us. After thirty-five years I can see our LP album.
Marko: After Novi Rock we made some new songs and recorded them. We had one more concert in Šiška and then our drummer had to go into the army. When he returned interest had vanished. We would have had to restore ourselves from point zero. It was mission impossible for us.

MRR: Was the reason maybe that you were older, that you didn't feel like proceeding, or...?
Marko: A bit of everything. We went to college...
Matej: There was no prospect to record anything else. Things were so closed that we didn't have any chances anymore. In 1978 and 1979 Radio Študent was interested in recordings. After 1982 that was all gone.
Marko: State label ZKP RTV Ljubljana changed too. It gave up on everything that smelled like punk.

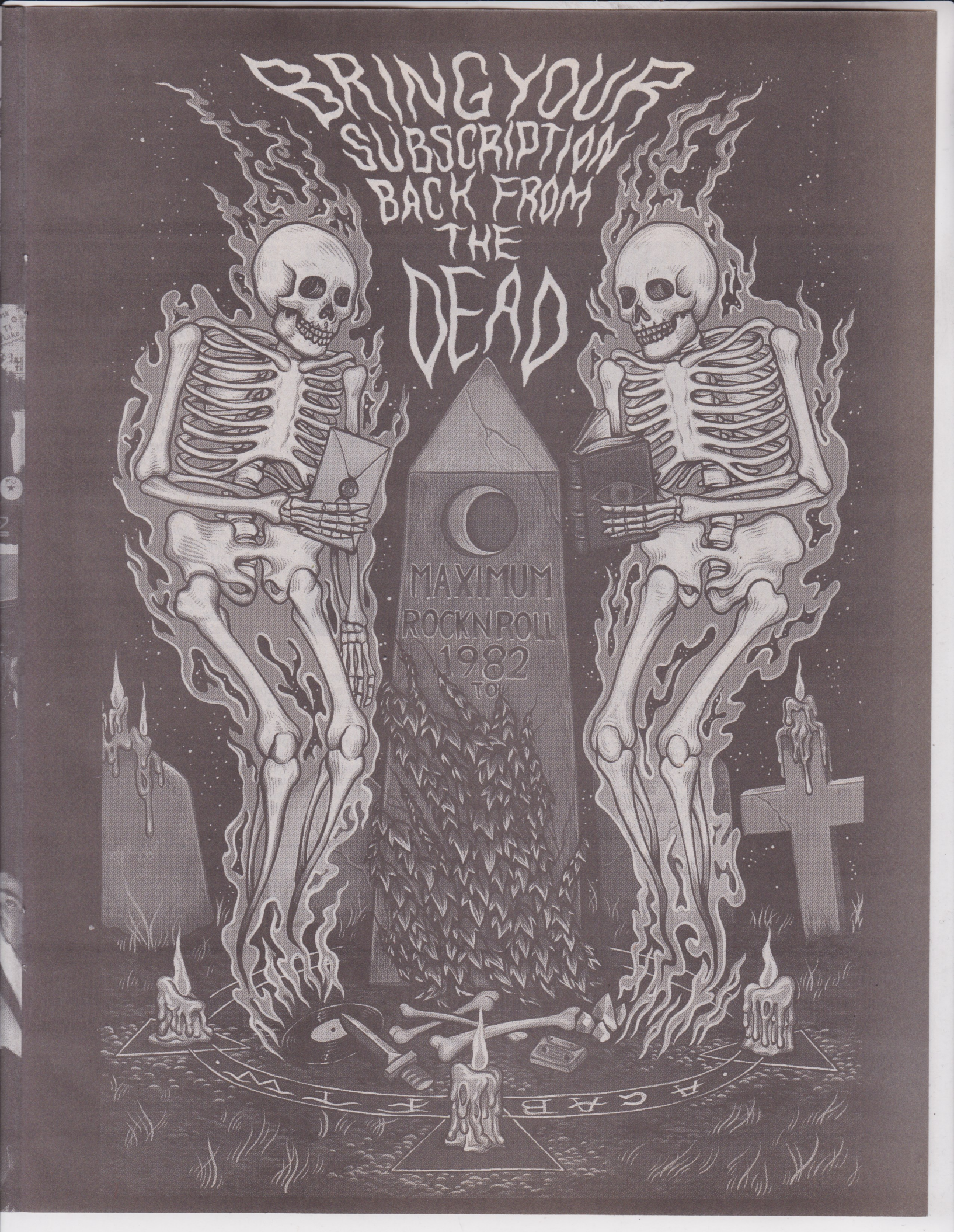
MRR: How would you divide phases of the band? The last phase is mainly distinguished by songs that differ from punk and New Wave. I hear also influences from rock and resistance.
Matej: We started as rock'n'rollers who played the Beatles. Then we transferred to our own rudimentary songs, which were created with the energy of seventeen-year-old kids. The songs that you mention were made after 1980. They were made under other influences: the Stranglers, Devo and similar. It is a mix of everything. Using keyboards, which weren't used in the usual way, helped us to make something different. The outcome was an opulence of sounds.
Marko: You could get a fine album from the last phase of material, if it was a bit more multiplied.

MRR: The album for Ne! Records is interesting, because we get some songs in different versions. Their comparison discloses differences and the evolution of your expression.
Marko: Through it the concept of experience and growing up are shown. At twenty, two years times seems like a long time. "Two years back was somewhere in our childhood." [laughs] Later in life those two years mean nothing. In adolescence every month or every three months something new happens. And what you did two years ago looks terribly obsolete. Also, because of this we didn't succeed to collect enough good songs for one album.

MRR: My favourite song is "Kontroliram Misli," which is still a very up-to-date song.
Marko: It's visionary.
Matej: There's one more song that was made before that—"Cenzura." It is up-to-date too. Unfortunately, we never recorded it.
Marko: We played it in Moste.
Matej: I didn't ask myself how I wrote songs before. I wrote them as I felt them. Now I find it interesting, that then we already had visionary thoughts. At seventeen to eighteen years, when we wrote the first songs, we already had a refined view of the world. I'm very proud that we could articulate thoughts at that age.

MRR: What affected it? Reading George Orwell and *1984*? Was it affected by the then-state of society? Did your influence come from literature and music?
Marko: Of course you absorb stuff. The look of the future was based on sci-fi, which is not only fiction today but reality. We probably felt it was going to happen. What sci-fi movies showed then is today in reality much wilder and winding.

Matej: WE WERE JULES VERNE. IF YOU HIT THE CORE, YOU STAY RELEVANT FOREVER. WE WERE MALADJUSTED, CYNICALLY IRONIC AND "SCREW EVERYTHING."


BRING YOUR
SUBSCRIPTION
BACK FROM
THE
DEAD
MAXIMUM
ROCKNROLL
1982
TO

TOŽIBABE

My first contact with Tožibabe (Telltales) was when I was about sixteen years old. I was hanging in a park with my friends and one of them was singing a song. She made an imaginary microphone out of her fist, her gaze became darker, her voice became lower and out of her came the words of Tožibabe's song "Nekega Lepega Dne." One line especially got to me: "Vsi bomo živeli nekega lepega dne!" (We will all live one beautiful day!). I was hooked.

Unfortunately I never saw Tožibabe live. This day in the park was many years after their break up. But they influenced me all the same. After all, they were girls in an all-girl hardcore band—not many like them around at that time. That alone was enough for me to hold them in awe. Simple, direct, sharp lyrics, which told a lot in not so many words, were, of course, a big extra bonus.

But of course I wasn't the only one who was inspired by this "girl power" phenomenon. And I wasn't the only one who respected and still respects them for their contribution to the Yugoslavian hardcore scene. Some people like them more because they were girls, others because their lyrics were sincere, and others still because of the whole package. They weren't just pretty girls with instruments. They were fighters who, as their guitarist Krischka says in this interview, also had a lot of fun in this fight. They showed that girls can also do something for the scene—that they can do a lot. Which, in a man driven scene like hardcore was in the '80s, was more than brave. I sat down with Krischka to talk about those days. Introduction and interview by Sabina Kraner.

MRR: How did Tožibabe happen?
The hardcore scene was basically only waking up at that time. And there were only boys. So we said, "What if we also try?! Nobody can play anyway." So we tried and did a few songs and that was it. The name alone was chosen completely as a joke. There was some hardcore concert in Šiška at a place where nowadays is a Mormon church. Members of U.B.R, Stres D.A and Via Ofenziva formed some hardcore band and then other hardcorers went and told on them, that they were not real hardcore. So we said, "Hello! You are some *speckahle* (snitches)!" And we thought, "Wow! That's actually a cool name for a band!" but then we decided on Tožibabe, because we thought it was better than Speckahle. And that was it. Basically it was kind of an answer to all those boy bands that existed at that time.

MRR: How did boys accept this? It's a very manly world, hardcore. They didn't try to be wise asses or impose their opinions?
They didn't do that. I think they accepted it quite well. This hardcore scene was actually quite funny. There were a few women, who were older than the male population. I think it was linked with that somewhat, when they said, "Okay, let girls do it too." And, for instance, at Novi Rock '86 where it was mostly a hardcore scene, if it weren't for us, no other hardcore band would have played either. We set a condition to Igor Vidmar that we would play only if other bands could play too.

MRR: When you started you didn't know how to play any instruments.
No. We learned everything through the band.

MRR: How old were you when you formed the band?
I think I was 19. Marsa was 20, and Lidija...

MRR: It meant you were quite old, then?
Yes, quite advanced in years. [laughs]

MRR: How was the start? Was it easy to play concerts?
Yes. Because—actually this was the advantage of Šiška and of course also K4. It was possible that you could have rehearsals in these places. First we had a place in the student campus, then for some time in Šiška and later in K4. And we had a lot of concerts. We were joking all the time that we were the state band because we played on every national holiday. When it was Republic Day in November we played and on May 25th (Youth Day and and Tito's birthday). May 1st, too (Labor Day).

MRR: Do you think it was helpful that you were all girls?
But of course! It always helps. Although, to be accepted by musicians as a woman you have to show much more than men. I always found it interesting that jazzists liked us. They said we had music with balls. Even though our performance was not very good, because none of us had any musical education, they still thought it had some soul and that still tells something.

MRR: Did you write all the music and lyrics alone?
We did it all ourselves. Except of course "Kuža Pazi" ("Child Song"). We did music together at rehearsals, but the lyrics are mostly Marsa's. Maybe we changed some later to fit into the music better. Sometimes it was that we figured out a riff and then stuck lyrics to it, but sometimes lyrics were first and then we made music according to the theme.

MRR: How many songs did you actually have?
I'm not sure. About 20, I think.

MRR: But they weren't all released?
No. Because it was kind of hard. Songs were short. Our longest song lasts about one minute and twenty seconds, I think.

MRR: You were changing instruments constantly. Was it depending on who brought the lyrics or wrote the riff?
No. We were changing them according to which song suited each of us most on each instrument.

MRR: Was it chaotic at concerts because of all this changing?
No, not really, because we always structured the concerts. I mostly played guitar and played bass for two songs. So we organized it that these songs came at the end, for instance. The chaos wasn't too big. But it was interesting when we played with some all-girl Canadian band. They were also changing instruments during the concert. So, obviously this wasn't only our concoction.

MRR: At that time there weren't really many women in hardcore. Did you have idols or role models?
No. We didn't do it because somebody else did. It just came spontaneously, as an answer. We didn't want to be just fans. We wanted to participate in something.

MRR: You were also very active outside the band...
Yes. We were writing for fanzines and we did a radio show once at Radio Student, a subject Saksida and Tomaž Mastnak quarreled about for a long time in the newspapers.

MRR: Why?
Well, they threw us out of the studio because the sound engineer freaked out, because we were joking around. And then we met Saksida, who was the chief editor at the time and he asked us, "Aren't you supposed to have a show?" So we told him that the technician, Miško, threw us out. So he said that the show had to be aired because he spent all night writing the review. We found it very funny that he was writing a review all night about something that was a complete joke. I don't remember what their debates were about. They were in *Mladina* or *Tribuna*. I think Mastnak told Saksida he is an infernal storyteller and Saksida fired back... It would be great to find this in some archive.

MRR: You said you had a lot of concerts. What about outside of Slovenia or Yugoslavia?
We did play around Yugoslavia. Not as much, but we had some concerts. I think our best concert was once in Belgrade where no Slovenians had heard us, except poor Dario, who was on tour with us and was losing his mind because he had three crazy hens around him—we were drinking all the time! Abroad, we played in Greece at the Mediterranean Biennale.

MRR: Did you get any invitations from, let's say, America? After all, you were suppose to be well known there. Or anywhere else?
No. Not that I know. You know, it was still Yugoslavia. Once U.B.R. played in Italy and we went with them. We had to get a certificate from ŠKUC that we were going to the concert, so that we could even get out of the country at all. It was still very problematic.

MRR: How did your families look upon girls playing in a hardcore band?
Well, my mum for instance, she wasn't very happy about it, because she had an important job—and me with that haircut! She always walked two meters behind me. But my dad was proud. He thought it was great that I participated in something. Music was only noise to him anyway.

MRR: You also made some videos. Again you did most of it alone, wrote the script... How many did you make?
I don't know really. I know we made them for "Nekega Lepega Dne" and "Dežuje."

MRR: Were they played on TV? Did you ever perform on television?
We didn't. Only what was shot at Novi Rock. I'm grining broadly in that recording. The cameraman told me to look into the camera, but I was like—don't you understand that I'm playing?! Don't disturb me now. Maybe national TV has some recordings because later we played in Krško with [Slovenian pop band] Agropop. We played in such weird combinations. That's why some recordings like that maybe could be found somewhere. But we didn't like to be shot then.

MRR: Because you were shy or...?
No, not like that; because of image. So there're not as many shots as there could have been.

MRR: Which songs are yours? I mean lyrics.
None. I'm not a lyric writer. I was the one who always had to memorize how the song went. Because Marsa and Lidija didn't remember. And when we made a song, I told them how to play here and how to play there.

MRR: You also had some other members?
For some time there was Pika. She played second guitar, but it didn't work for some reason. At Novi Rock and for some time there was also Barbara. I think her family name was Stuhec. She played synth. She was a real pianist. She also played synth on the EP that we released, on the songs "Dežuje," "Lutke," "Ti," and "Trash." To fill up the sound a little bit.

MRR: What music did you listen otherwise?
I don't know. Mostly hardcore of that time. And, of course let's not forget that reggae was also present in punk. They were always going hand in hand. But otherwise, I'm a rocker at heart. And still today. I like music. I even liked disco and still do. If it's good it's good and it doesn't matter what genre it is. It feels good. Different rhythm, different touch. But otherwise, bands of that time. Bands that were played on Radio Student. I think that Radio Student was quite alternative in terms of music. I don't know how it is nowadays.

MRR: It's interesting, now that we have the internet and all that, to see how much Yugoslavian punk was acknowledged outside of the region, even if there were no communication options. But today, even kids here don't wanna go to a concert if it's free. Unless it's some old or famous or very pop band. Did you see a lot of concerts in Slovenia? And abroad?
Yes. We were hitchiking. We even hitchhiked to our own concert once.

MRR: With instruments?
No, because we didn't have our own instruments. We mostly played U.B.R's instruments. You know the song "Tožibabe?" "Tožibabe igramo / delamo reklamo za sceno / igramo instrumente od U.B.R"? ("Tožibabe, we play / we're giving a plug for the scene / we play on instruments from U.B.R."). It was always true what we were talking about. We practiced only at rehearsals. None of us had instruments at home. Marsa had her own bass later. But she worked with 2227 later on. When we broke up, I completely left the scene. We have a good relationship now. But then it was very...you know.

MRR: How long were you together, actually?
Well, we had the first concert on New Year's Eve in 1984. Somewhere in 1987, I think, we broke up. I had enough and we got on each other's nerves, you know. You can't work like that.

MRR: How do you see this era today? Would you change anything?
I would learn to play an instrument. I did many things in life and I'm sorry for some that I didn't. I wanted to study medicine. Now I'm sorry that I didn't, because I know I would be capable enough to do it. Especially today, when you see doctors who shouldn't be doctors. But I alway look upon this era with pride and I'm glad. My daughters don't give much of a damn about it, but my son likes it.

MRR: Do you get any feedback from younger generations about what you did? Have you heard that you inspired someone?
It happens sometimes. For instance, not long ago at a football training of my son's, I talked to this guy. He asked if I was a punk rocker. I told him I was opening bottles with my teeth and that I played in Tožibabe. And he was totally thrilled. Novi Rock where Tožibabe played was the first Novi Rock that he attended. I'm always glad if someone tells me something like that. And when you read on the internet, for instance on YouTube, that "Dežuje" has 12,000 views. I think this is a lot for something that happened 30 years ago in some obscure scene. And then when you read the comments... I'm very glad because they find something in this music even today. Although for us it was really just having fun. We didn't have illusions that we were some big shot musicians.

MRR: But either way, you wanted to say something through this music? The lyrics are pretty serious.
Of course. And we did say something. It wasn't only music, but the whole package. I liked hardcore because you could say something without mincing matters.

MRR: What are Tožibabe doing today?
Lidija teaches Slovenian, I am a revisor at the State Budget supervision office and have five kids. Marsa works with Lunin.net, dealing with astrology. She also still paints.

MRR: Would you agree to reunite?
Lidija and me would instantly. But Marsa wouldn't. We talked about it already and Marsa told us she thinks it's lame. Also to me reunions are kind of nonsense.

MRR: But lots of reunions happen today. Kids grew up and people are coming back...
Yes. And you can do it. But me and Lidija... Lidija was a drummer in most of the songs, except those that Marsa took over on drums, and she said that she misses the energy that you throw out through this... I would enjoy it too. We just have to convince Marsa.

"WE DIDN'T DO IT BECAUSE SOMEDODY ELSE DID. IT JUST CAME SPONTANEOUSLY AS AN ANSWER. WE DIDN'T WANT TO BE JUST FANS. WE WANTED TO PARTICIPATE IN SOMETHING."

WE WERE NOT BORED.
WE WERE NOT FIRST.
AND
WE DIDN'T PLAY FOOOTBALL!

ŠUND

In the 1970s and 1980s in the Republic of Yugoslavia, the so-called "committee for trash" existed, which appraised and evaluated cultural products, including musical records. If they got labeled as trash or kitsch, they were taxed, making them more expensive. Although this measure wasn't the most popular amongst musicians and consumers, most performers weren't ashamed of it and fans preferred to buy such records in protest. If anything, this was a sign of maladjustment, unsuitability and deviation from autonomously socialist values. Discussions about the justification of this committee were kindled in the media by the taxation of Pankrti's first record in 1980 with questions such as why some records were taxed and others not, who decides on the taxation, and upon what basis or criteria. In the collision of rock culture with disco fans of John Travolta, a question of whether disco was kitsch snapped. It was one more battle of a punk rock generation against bourgeois culture. After KuZle, at that time in Idrija, one more band rumbled and named itself Šund (Trash). I always forget to ask my Boris Čibej, my good friend, a main member of this band, and former correspondent from Moscow and New York, and today a political commentator for Delo *newspaper, if the band was named after this committee. But maybe it's so self-evident, that I forget to out of shame, that I might ridicule myself in front of him. After all, they had a song named "Komisija za Šund"* ("Committee for Trash").

At the beginning of 1980, Šund, together with KuZle, represented the core of Idrija's punk and belonged to the first punk generation after Pankrti. Along with Boris Čibej, who was the guitar player and author of most of the lyrics and music, this quartet was composed of frontman Rober "Robi" Pajer and bass player Zlatko "Zlate" Klemenčič. The drummers Ivan "Iči" Kolenc and Vojko "Vojc" Česnik alternated. With the latter, the band recorded songs for the compilation Lepo Je... in the summer of 1980. They went down in history of Slovene punk with songs like "Gadavič," "Bil," "Komisija za Šund" *and* "Dvign Roko," *but that is not all that the band created, played, and recorded. That's why the announcement by Swedish label Ne! Records, about the release of a retrospective record with the rest of the studio recordings plus recordings from Šund's performance at Novi Rock '81, is such joyful news—because we will get a document of one more diamond in the rough of Yugoslavian punk. Its merit was a twitching intertwining of punk engagement and cutting edge with catchy ska riffs. I talked to founding member Boris Čibej (who I once again forgot to ask where the name Šund came from!) about how Šund happend, what was happening to young punkers in the mining-working class town of Idrija and why the band broke up.*

INTERVIEW BY IGOR BAŠIN

MRR: Both bands of Idrija punk, Sund and KuZle, were formed from the same band.
Yes, Paraziti was the predecessor of both. Paraziti was Iztok "Itko" Turk" and me on guitar, Dušan "Dule" Moravec on bass, and Bojan "Buni" Lapajna on vocals. Drums were played by Ivan "Iči" Kolenc, who was in both KuZle and Šund. In the beginning we didn't have our own songs. We played the Sex Pistols and the Ramones and Atomsko Sklonište, mostly for a joke. I think we had only one or two of our own songs. Then we renamed ourselves KuZle; the name was thought of by Dare Kaurič, later the driving force of KuZle, and for it Dule had to buy him fried cheese in the legendary Idrija tavern Nebesa. Soon after renaming themselves, they kicked Iči and me out of the band. In came Dare, and I still don't know if he ever gave back the money for that fried cheese.

MRR: When did this happened? In 1978? 1979?
No, if my memory is not deceiving me, we started to rub wires only at the beginning of 1980. We were brats. Itko was born in 1965, most of the rest of us in 1964, Dare Kaurič who joined later is a few years older. At that time he played in the commercial rock band Amen. He was already a great guitar player as a kid. He was more into classic rock in the beginning and played Jimi Hendrix by heart.

In Idrija there are two apartment buildings where all the music beginners of Idrija's punk lived. They were the headquarters of our "cell." On the ground floor of the middle entrance to the building at Rožna Ulica No.10 (which was sinking into the mine under it already by then), lived Dule. On the middle floor above him lived his cousin Samo, who sang in some bands that never went anywhere. I lived in Apartment No. 6 on the third floor; above me at No. 8 was Bojan Pajer-Pili, drummer of KuZle and later Radio Panoi. In another famous part in of the old town lived Kaurič and Buni, the guitarist and singer from KuZle, who later formed Bojler. Those two were inseparable, and then Buni's relative Itko moved to Idrija, and hung out with them all the time. We are the same generation with my oldest friend Dule, with whom we were also roommates twice later in life, and friends since childhood. First we played together as kids and swapped toys, and then we were doing it with music. I was interested in music since childhood, probably because I'm from a very musical family—my father played clarinet and saxophone and had eleven brothers and sisters and practically everybody played something. I engaged myself in music pretty late, laically and without any formal musical education. But even before that I listened and read a lot. In seventh and eighth grade of primary school I wrote papers about the history of rock'n'roll and was DJ-ing at school dances with Buni. Poor pupils, they had to dance and snuggle to our, to put it mildly, very unusual music selection.

MRR: Was Šund a high school band?
Šund was a crazy combination. When we played at Novi Rock '81 I had just entered my second year of high school, but our singer Robi was still in eighth grade, in primary school. The bassist had just come back from the army; he was already nineteen years old, same as the drummer. Proletariats directly from the production line; we were schoolboys. It was similar with KuZle.

MRR: Did you fall in love with music through *Džuboks* magazine or licensed publications, which were possible to get then? Did the proximity of Italy influence this?
Both! *Džuboks* had a strong influence. We read it. We also followed what was happening in Slovenia, although we had a feeling that not much was going on. We listened to the radio show Rokenrol v Vsako Slovensko Vas (Rock'n'roll to Every Slovenian Village) on national radio, in which one of the pioneers of punk in Slovenia, Andrej Šifre—something not many people realize now—unveiled new music that was arising in England. Dule and I shut ourselves into his father's Zastava 850 and listened to it whenever it aired. We didn't get Radio Študent in Idrija, so it didn't directly influence us, but we were discovering music simultaneously, sometimes even before gangs from Študent. Every now and then we got *New Musical Express,* though none of us could brag about our proficiency in English. But we hung in old Gorizia, in neighboring Italy, where they had two record shops where we bought and ordered music a lot. The seller was our advisor. There I often met Igor Vidmar, who still had long hair. We listened to records, discussed them, and swapped them in Idrija. When we went to Gorizia with Dule, we often bought different records so that we didn't have the same ones. It was like this already before punk, when we were in our Bob Dylan listening phase, and this way we quickly collected all of his releases despite a chronic lack of money. We were quite different to each other. We didn't all like the same groups. I couldn't cope with that more anthemic punk, because it reminded me too much of some classic rock "farts." A sharp and rhythmic sound suited me more. Meanwhile Boris Balant who wrote not a few lyrics for KuZle had more of a "mod" manner and was listening to David Bowie.

MRR: What was the reason for forming Paraziti?
You think I remember?! I know that Dule and I started learning to play guitar at approximately the same time. The main reason for the band's emergence was Itko's arrival in Idrija. He was the son of a military man, who was transferred from Zadar to Ljubljana and, although the youngest, he, unlike most of us natives, knew at least a bit how to play a guitar, and he knew how to bang the drums. Because soldiers were transferred overnight at that time, and because his family didn't have everything arranged in Ljubljana, his parents sent him to relatives in Idrija, to Buni's cousin's family. When he got to seventh or eight grade we started to play. Brats, indeed. After this inaugural tripping we renamed ourselves to KuZle, before they decided to do a little reorganization, which happened in my absence, and after which there wasn't a place for me in the band anymore. Out of regard for the truth, I really didn't belong there. They told me, as a joke, that they kicked me out because I could pluck only up and not also down. This wasn't exactly the truth, but in any case I couldn't match Kaurič on guitar. Itko transferred to drums, guitar was taken over by the maestro Kaurič. If this hadn't happened, KuZle likely would have never happened. I found other people and formed my own band. There was no offense. We remained best friends, visited each other at rehearsals, helped each other with promotion and gig organization, and especially partied madly together. I started to find interest in other, slightly different things. I listened to reggae a lot—Aswad, Black Uhuru,

Idrija

AFTER ALL, PUNK IS RADICALIZED ROCK'N'ROLL. ITS SOCIAL CONTENT IS WHAT MATTERS, MOST OF ITS MESSAGES STILL HOLD TRUE.

Linton Kwesi Johnson; ska—Madness, Bad Manners, the Specials, the Selecter, the Beat. I was completely moved when I heard Gang of Four for the first time. I liked the music, but it didn't mean that I also wanted to play it. What we were listening to then can probably be felt in our songs, even if we did try so hard to be "authentic." It is also true that, for me, an involvement with music always meant something more than just music itself—which is the point: movement, fight. Is it called anti-globalism? At that time it was class war!

MRR: Where did you have concerts? Did you have a club?

There was Klub Cladih (Youth Club), where a classic rock scene dominated. Because Kaurič, who was a star of the classic rock scene before, was with us, they left us alone. Šund had its first concert at the county hall in Spodnja Idrija, which was renowned for wild firefighters' parties. We played only three or four songs, thanks to the "headliners" and then leading Idrija dance band, Hg. They were mostly relatives and friends anyway, who let us present ourselves on their instruments, in spite of their primary fear. The first gigs happened without Robi, because in the beginning I also labored on vocals. Our first headlining concert was in the gym of the school I went to. Contrary to popular myth about the "lively Idrija scene," we had a very small audience in our town. It sounds nice if you say "Idrija's punk scene," but altogether there was only ten of us, at least in the beginning. Which is to say those two apartment building halls and two or three passengers. We had a bigger audience in Metlika or Goriška Brda. In Idrija we almost got into fights with our peers several times.

MRR: Were fights on a subculture level? Punks against rockers, punks against freaks?

Yes, punks against rockers it was called then. One of our fans, my younger cousin, wasn't in Idrija a lot, because he was going to police school in Tacen. He was a punker, who went to police school, but when he came to Idrija, peers from the neighbourhood didn't beat him up because he went to police school, but because he was wearing safety pins and badges. Those were stupid incidents, which were not always completely innocent. Once it almost came to a mass brawl. There were four or five times as many opponents when they surrounded five of us punkers—we were just sitting around and provoked them merely with our looks. We weren't surprised by their aggression, but we were staggered that Bosnian immigrants joined them. And that after KuZle's song "Vahid" (which talks about a Bosnia boy loving a Slovenian girl whose father disallows her seeing him) was already a hit in the Slovenian punk scene! They started to insult us and to provoke a fight. Because we weren't so stupid as to get into a fight with such a numerically superior enemy, we drew out chains. When the biggest brawler started to say that we were cowards because we only dared to fight with chains, Buni lost his temper. He threw his chain to the ground and beat up the provoker to a pulp. Both camps just stood there and watched. When the provoker stumbled off, Buni looked at them and asked, "Anybody else?" And they quietly went away. Funny and stupid. Even more stupid was when Nazi affairs started, which were ignited by Nedeljski Dnevnik. At the outbreak of this verbal abuse of mass media against punk, rednecks who threatened to beat up Nazis appeared in Idrija too. Because of this media shit, we had problems with civil society, not authorities, with whom we didn't have any real conflicts.

I remember we had smart professors then, who made schedule such that we never started school on Fridays earlier than 11am. One Friday, after an evening at Klub Mladih, a policeman came to the door. He wanted to talk to me about the graffiti that had showed up around town. I just watched bemusedly, still half asleep lying on my bed, while he looked around my room and stared into my school certificate full of only A's and B's in shock. He thought we were all scoundrels. When he saw my school markers on the desk he asked, "You draw on the walls with them?" I answered, "If you had noticed, they are drawn with spray paint." The story is really funny. The trouble was caused because the graffiti said "Mesarič je pizda" (Mesarič is a cunt). That was the name of the boss of Idrija's youth organization at that time, who took money from all of us, or especially KuZle, for the rehearsal place, or he wouldn't allow any of us to have a concert. But I was informed that he was nice enough to not not demand police prosecution as long as we repainted the walls ourselves. I guess they thought I was the most cooperative "boss of the cell." They were probably right, although in front of the cop I pretended that I had no clue who did the grafitti, I informed Buni nothing would happen to him if he painted over the grafitti. We all helped him and we even got the paint from the youth organization, and above all, we never had any problems with them after that. This was the only incident with uniformed authorities in Idrija which I experienced because I was a punker. But Buni had more serious run-ins with the police because of graffiti. They caught him writing "KuZlograd" (KuZlotown) on an Idrija road sign that stood near our drummer's house, where Šund had rehearsals.

Small towns like Idrija were already, before punk, something completely different to Ljubljana. In a small community you cannot be a tough policeman. We had one, but he didn't last long. It's completely different in bigger cities, like Ljubljana, where police pigs can hide in anonymity. There I had my only serious encounter with anti-punk state repression. Me and Buni were arrested while we were leaving an official meeting at RTV Ljubljana, where we were discussing the realization of Novi Rock '81. Criminal patrol idiots in plain clothes attacked us in the middle of the morning at Titova Ulica just because we wore black jackets. Then we were stuck all day at the cen-

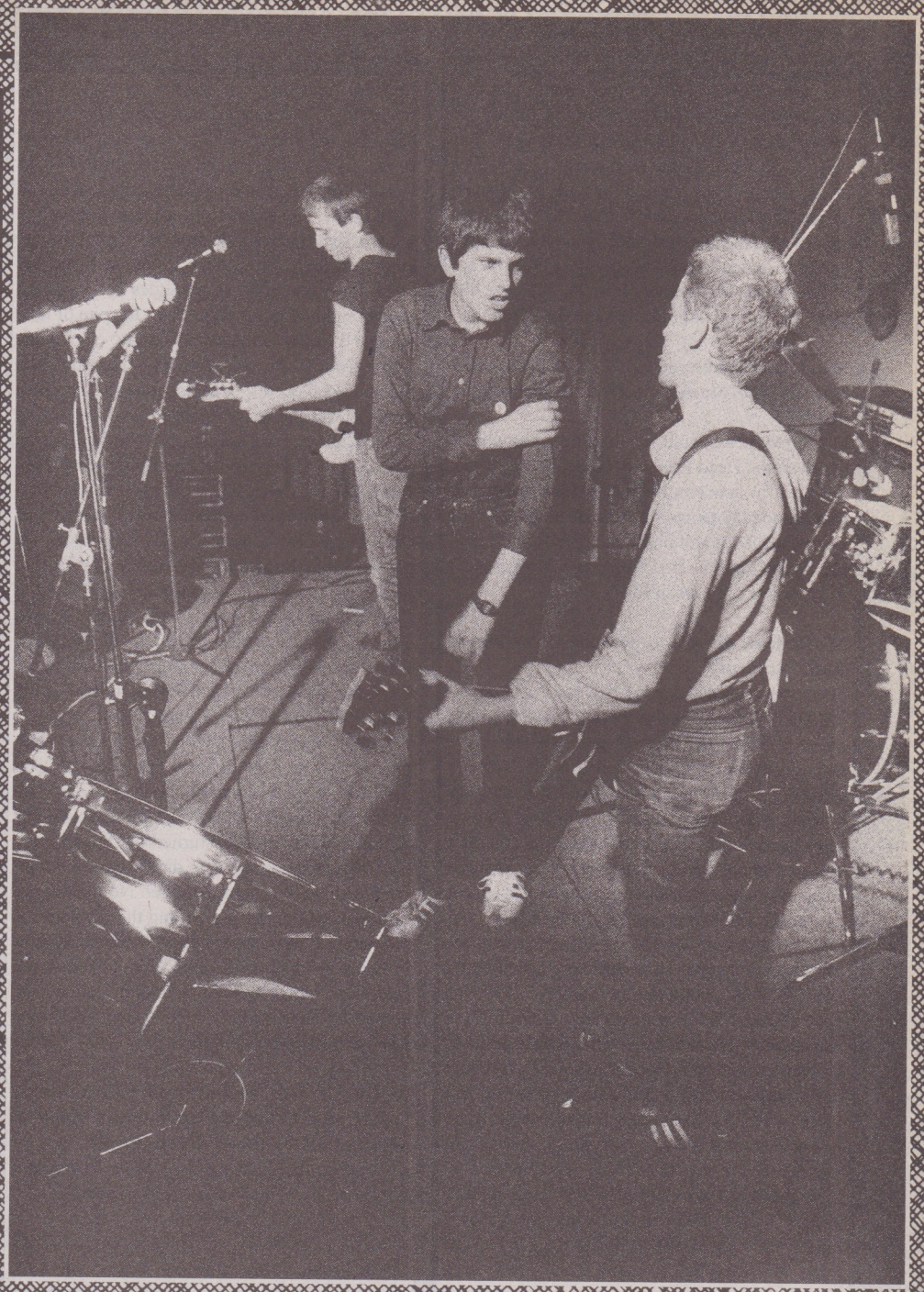
tral police station near Parliament, where other idiots who worked there didn't know what to do with us. Only some oddball who called us in for questioning from time to time would give us moral lectures about the kind of degenerates of socialist society us punkers were. Those were people who despite their age had read significantly fewer books than any of us youth rebels.

MRR: Idrija punk band lyrics were locally tinged, including "Gadavič."

All of our lyrics are minimalistic and a metaphor for repression, which we never really experienced in our own skin. But we weren't ignorant about what happened elsewhere around the country. Our generation didn't sit around and theorize about revolution and the world. We tried to say it with music and lyrics. In songs I tried to express my attitude towards the world; not only some remote world, but the one that was there in front of us all. That's why Šund had songs about immigrants from the south, which were already then wrongfully considered second-rate citizens. One of my favorite lyrics is for "Men' je Vseen" (I Don't Care). One of our high school teachers accidentally found it written on a bench in school and said, "If I knew who had written such cynical lyrics, I would demand that this person be expelled from school. Young generations can't write like this." But the text is so innocent: It's about the phenomenon of fake compassion, which we still notice today, when in the west we shed crocodile tears about the suffering of others. "Men' je Vseen" is about people, who watch with great compassion on TV how people die around the world, but in reality they don't give a fuck about them. Everything is only a spectacle.

We really weren't "bored." Nobody was very enthusiastic about football either, which was an obsession among punkers in the capital city. I have title for the interview: "We weren't bored, we weren't first, and we didn't play football!" We did kick a ball around sometimes, but football as a spectacle of primitive cheering and rampant herd instinct was repulsive to us. Real punkers should fight against sports like this, which are actually the embodiment of the most primitive nationalistic and chauvinistic herd instincts. In Idrija they didn't go together, so you couldn't play punk in the morning and go to a Oberkrainer folk music concert in the evening—which was allegedly happening in Sarajevo. We didn't want to have anything in common with ideologically brainwashed thugs, the Lumpenproletariat as Marx called them, whose social powers and numeric transition into capitalism and so called democracy never decreased.

We were still children of socialism. And what's wrong with socialism? In my humble opinion this is still the best social system. If I didn't fight for something as a punker, I didn't fight for capitalism. We didn't fight for an independent Slovenia or autonomous Idrija either. We saw social problems and looked at them naively, like pondering teenagers. Those were really crazy times in their own way—how could you become some kind of revolutionary with such a naive approach and an even more naive artistic form? But I always had problems with lyrics. Not only because I didn't feel like making them up, but also I always asked myself what kind of effect they really had. Nobody understood them at the concerts anyway, because conditions for playing were pretty awful. On the other hand, our form of music is such that lyrics are hard to understand even in ideal conditions. I always wondered if people understood anything I was singing about. Or was it only about the party? Punk wasn't a movement, if we understand movements in a sense of leading somewhere. It was a movement for nothing. Nihilism. I felt it that way. We did notice crap around us, but we didn't have illusions that it could be changed. History proved that we weren't very wrong. Strictly speaking it was about what we felt then and punk gave us a chance to express it. The form was brilliant. I liked it and I still like to listen to it from time to time, as I do rock'n'roll. After all, punk is radicalized rock'n'roll. Its social content is what matters, most of its messages still hold true. In all these years they didn't lose much actuality. But it was about politicization, which often led into neglecting music.



MRR: When and how did Idrija's punk scene establish a connection with Ljubljana's scene?

Radio Študent made recordings possible at that time and so we sent them a tape, and started to play and get to know people from the scene. We were going to Metlika to see Indust-Bag and to Ormož for Gnile Duše. Those were local scenes with funky people. We had a feeling that in Ljubljana things were peculiar. All big critics were double functionaries; they also promoted bands.

We weren't really part of it and throughout that time we were also at a financial minus. We didn't go anywhere to play for money. It was important that you had drinks and that it was a party. We never had a direct connection with Ljubljana's scene. That maybe wasn't bad at all. If you come from a blockheaded province, you have to work harder to be really good at what you do to be accepted by the big brothers from the big city. Because of that we didn't have time for boredom.

MRR: Did you attend concerts in Ljubljana? Ruts in 1980, Siouxsie in 1981, the Stranglers in 1978?
Of course! If we could, we didn't miss anything, not even the Dead Kennedys concert in Gorizia. We went to concerts by bus. If we managed to find an acquaintance we slept at their place; if not we stayed up all night and mostly partied at the station until the first bus, which took us back to school or our jobs in Idrija.

MRR: How did you experience recording at Radio Študent?
When we recorded for the first time at Študent, we were doing it on two channels. Bass was plugged into one channel and the rest went through one microphone. You couldn't overdub anything. But if I compare these first recordings to those which were recorded with Jurij Toni on five channels for the record, I think the first ones were probably better, more authentic, sharper. Jurij, who later became an excellent producer and made a miracle out of Šarlo Akrobata, was still learning with us. The recording went in the same running order as bands were arranged on the *Lepo Je...* compilation. First guinea pigs were KuZle. When we recorded second, they had already learnt a little bit more, but it was still pretty hard. With recording every additional band they got better. But KuZle were the real victims, because their songs were pressed onto to the record at a very high speed; faster than they were able to play and sing. You had to slow your speed on the record player by hand in order to get it right. We were probably not the only ones who were convinced that we always had huge problems with sound technicians, both at concerts and recordings. It never was as it should be.

To be fair, some were very good, but sometimes it seemed that behind their mixing tables stood another typical socialist waiter: the more you gesticulated, the more they pretended they could not see you and stared through you into some bright future. However, impossible technical conditions sometimes even contributed to a better atmosphere in the audience. When we played in Kamnik in front of a school for children with special needs, my microphone was so charged with static electricity that I was almost thrown to the ground when I touched it with my lips while singing. The audience was already excited about the music itself, but the real satisfaction outbreak was observed only when electric shocks threw me around the stage.

MRR: Where else did you play?
Around Ljubljana, the school of philosophy, Novi Rock, at Bežigrad in a local community hall stadium where we had one of our best concerts. Another really good performance was in Hala Tivoli where we performed together with stars of the Slovenian rock scene in support of the workers' uprising against the regime in Poland back then. Now, when I look back and see what came out of these struggles for so-called human rights, I don't regret that. In spite of Igor Vidmar's rage, I joined a variety comedians group from D' Pravda when they played "Podmoskovski Večeri." We also opened for Belgrade's Idoli and were supposed to be supporting for Discharge, but I traveled to London exactly at that time. Otherwise, we performed further in Novo Mesto, Celje, Kranj, a few times in Metlika. We didn't play in Nova Gorica, but we had one of our best concerts in Goriška Brda. We played in the huge hall on Hum, a concert that also featured such stars as Grupa 92 and Paraf in their second formation with the female singer. The concert was an absolute party, the audience was constantly demanding more—but not of the stars, they demanded us. They shouted: "Idrija, Idrija! We want KuZle! We want Šund!"

I think that KuZle, who were a little tired, played only two more songs, more for a joke. Then we stepped onto the stage, played one song and in the middle of the next one, which was the hit "Gadavič," they turned off the electricity, because the organizers didn't have a permit for the concert to go any longer. No matter, our drummer continued to play and the whole room was singing along with us about cops hitting us over the head. I admit that at first I liked it, but then I was horrified. I really wouldn't want to do something that was completely opposite to the non-celebrity nature of punk.

MRR: In their sound Šund had a strong, catchy ska feeling. What did you think of Šarlo Akrobata who decomposed it?
For me Šarlo Akrobata is still one of the best bands of the Yugoslavian music scene, and I don't mean only punk and New Wave. I saw them once, maybe twice. They played like a machine. Even if I was into ska, I never liked the variation of "Mi Plešemo" by Prljavo Kazalište. I respected the destruction of ska and not its bending and trivialization. We had a song, "Naši Brati," which was mix of pure ska and Balkan melodies, but the lyrics weren't like stupid hedonism, which pervaded the Zagreb scene then.

MRR: What led to the end of Šund?
We went to the army. Some continued later in Radio Panoi, into which KuZle and Šund partially merged. I had quit earlier, more than one year before leaving for the army. At that time I probably didn't even know how to argue about why I dissolved the band, that's why my comrades were shocked, even hurt. When I look back now and try to interpret my decision at that time, I would say that I just realized that I'm musically too weak to continue with a group in which I was a driving force, as music and lyrics were mainly my work. We did together only arrangements. I still hold a grudge against my parents for two things: the first is that I was baptized without being asked; the other was not being asked about being sent to a music school as a fledgling young musician. I felt that for serious a music career I lacked too many skills, and at the same time I was already too old and too impatient to start doing it from the very beginning. I had a lot to say otherwise, but I struggled hard to really say it. When I saw Kaurič, how he came to each class with at least one new song, I pondered. I needed at least five classes to give birth to something that resembled a draft of a new song. With a little knowledge of the musical craft I would not have had these problems. So, I felt increasingly more like someone who would like to exploit the almighty computer, but didn't even know how to use an ordinary typewriter.

MRR: But you couldn't manage without playing and so in 1986 you entered S.O.R., during the last phase of that hardcore band from Idrija.
I substituted for the bassist, who went to the army. We even played two of my songs, which transmuted from hardcore screaming into a hard dub (probably the influence of Bad Brains, whom I still like), but it was no longer what I was previously doing with my heart. S.O.R. was a good band, but I was already an old fart for them. We did not have the same views on music. My view of the world was still full of class war. For me times were still paradoxical. When anarchism was offering a way into a better future, back then it seemed that we could see the light at the end of the tunnel. Yet the current state of mind and society in general, show that looking at this exaggerated lamplight hindered our rebellious spirit and we managed to miss the tunnel altogether along the way. Most of the protagonists from those days are immersed in the mechanisms of the current regime. We went down a similar path as the "great revolutionaries" of the student movements at the end of 1960s. But punk was not an evolutionary movement. It demanded a revolution. Therefore, today's real punkers are only the ones who can shit on the legacy of old farts like us.

ŠUND

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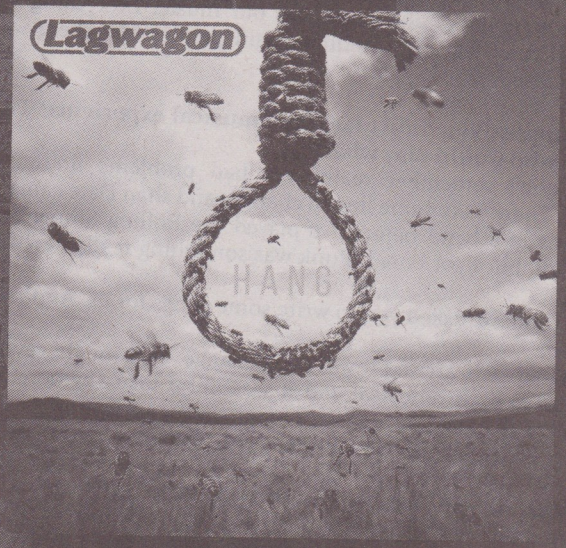

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KuZle

Kuzle. Bitches. With the word "Zle" included, the meaning extends to Evil Bitches, a punk band from Idrija, a small Slovenian industrial town with the population of no more than 7,000. In the words of the leading Slovenian punk poet and punk icon Esad Babačić, KuZle was the only real punk band in former Yugoslavia. They played from 1980 to 1982 and stayed in touch ever since, with no intention whatsoever to play again. In recent years, we finally lived to see several releases of their music. We met the guitarist and main author of music and lyrics Dare Kaurič, the bass player Dušan Moravec, and the singer Bojan Lapanja on a sunny afternoon in Ljubljana, over coffee and beer, with the full moon approaching, to speak about those crazy two years once again.

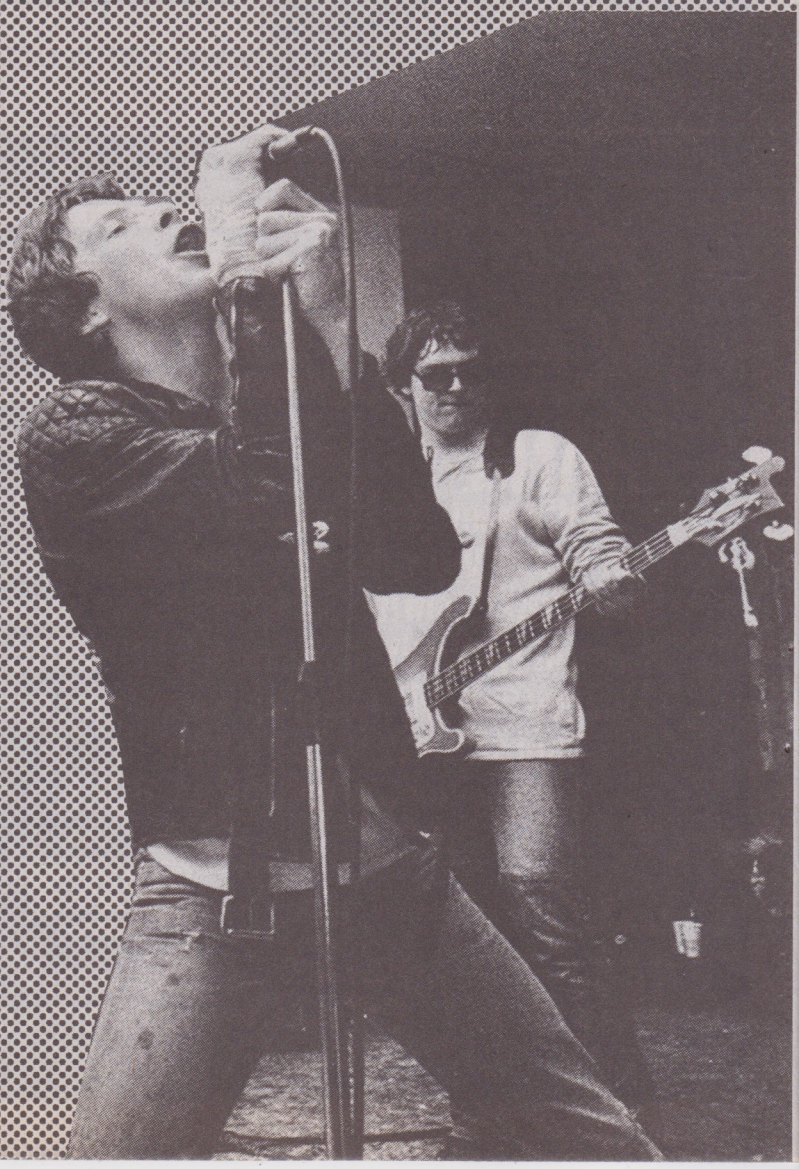
The Slovenian town of Idrija was famed across the entire former Yugoslavia due to its mercury mine, the second largest in the world. And since former Yugoslavia was very much into glorifying achievements like that, Idrija was a renowned place which children were taught about in schools. The town, which has existed for over 500 years, is also famous for its lace and the oldest miners' brass band. Due to its proximity to Italy, where Idrija townsfolk would go to buy jeans, coffee and groceries, and due to being embedded in a valley and surrounded by forests and hills, it has always been somewhat isolated and thus self-sufficient. Idrija certainly was not a typical Yugoslavian town. This is perhaps why it gave birth to a special breed of punk music that did not draw from the main music centers of former Yugoslavia, but took its own original path. Initial introduction by Dušan Moravec of KuZle, interview and introduction by Jure Longyka.

MRR: For starters, what was Idrija like at the end of the '70s?
Dušan: It was interesting. Very colorful. There were miners in their work outfits going from one shaft to another, there were patients from the local mental hospital walking the streets in their robes, and each autumn 300 new girls arrived from all over the region to attend the teacher training high school. For us, it was one of the seven wonders of the world.
Bojan: We were kids back then. We were fifteen, sixteen. We dug music and when punk arrived it blew our minds.

MRR: And you had to have a punk band of your own.
Bojan: There was no question about it. We had to do something and it was a natural choice.
Dare: Well, for picking up girls it wasn't really. [laughs].
Bojan: We were angry and punk was our music. Everything we heard until then felt so secondhand and predictable, there was nothing to discover.

MRR: I suppose you didn't have any musical experience. Did you draw who would play what?
Bojan: I don't remember really. We had problems finding a drummer. There were some lineup changes and then Dare came.
Dare: I was in a band before, we played the Rolling Stones and similar stuff, but I got bored. Punk was something really new and I liked it.
Dušan: I think we asked you to write some songs for us. And then you stayed.
Bojan: When Dare arrived it was a big change. He brought several new songs to each rehearsal and it was not a joke anymore, we really had to practice a lot.
Dare: Yep, on a good day we sounded great. [laughs]

MRR: What did the local community think of you?
Dare: We didn't get rejected or anything. Many people were very supportive. The headmistress of the local high school offered us a place to practice and our first gig was at a school dance. We played in Idrija quite a lot.
Dušan: We had our own way and didn't care about anybody. Nobody took us seriously at first. Not until newspapers started writing about us. Beside some graffiti persecution we had no



clashes with the authorities. We got excused from school whenever we had gigs. The elders with some brains tolerated us, I think they found us nice.
Bojan: We definitely weren't mean. Some older rock fans looked down on us for not respecting their rock gods and the insufferable music they made. The teacher at the music school was shocked, she said that what we did wasn't even music. But generally people didn't have a clue about what we did or what we wanted.
Dušan: Neither did we.

MRR: So you were considered delinquents? Or average?
Dare: Neither. We were average juvenile delinquents. Average drinkers and glue sniffers.

MRR: You actually sniffed glue?
Dare: If the Ramones sang "Now I Wanna Sniff Some Glue," we had to try it.
Dušan: But not a lot. It really is poisonous.
Dare: When the word got around they stopped selling glue to kids in local stores. They wouldn't even sell you a plastic bag.

MRR: You were around for what, two years?
Dare: It was like a blitzkrieg. We wrote about sixty songs and played about thirty gigs in two years time. We kept getting new information from the punk records we were buying and ideas just flew.
Bojan: Being different was a virtue, a necessity. We were buying records in Gorizia just over the Slovenian-Italian border and we had the agreement that nobody would buy the same record so we could hear as many as possible. I remember when the Ramones' *Rocket to Russia* came to Idrija. The record circulated the town for weeks.
Dare: We read *Džuboks*, the main—and for a long time, the only—music magazine in former Yugoslavia. That was where we first read about the Sex Pistols. But to us they weren't half as interesting as the Ramones. I'll never forget the moment we first heard "Rockaway Beach" on the *That Summer* compilation. Fuck, that was it! That was the way we wanted to sound. We played our first songs without pause just like they did. Then came the Clash, Stranglers, Gang of Four, Siouxsie and The Banshees, Ruts, Stiff Little Fingers, and many others.

MRR: It seems incredible that in a really small town in socialist Yugoslavia 35 years ago you had all that information that fast.
Dušan: I agree—by today's standards we were in the Stone Age. But we longed, we struggled for information. Luckily there was the Old Swan Music Centre in Gorizia only 70 kilometers (43.5 miles) away.

MRR: How did the big step of getting out of the garage happen?
Bojan: I went to high school in Ljubljana and stayed on campus near the hotel where the famous punk impresario Igor Vidmar lived. Somehow, I got his number. I called him and sent him a tape we made at a rehearsal. A week later he called, and three weeks later we played at Disco FV, the main alternative venue in Ljubljana.
Dušan: We supported the Lublanski Psi (Ljubljana Dogs), a renowned band at the time. They had style, they wore leather, they looked really tough. We were from a province—it was obvious. Ten years later you would describe our image as grunge. But when we started to play...
Dare: ...yeah, it was a good gig. Things started to roll after that.

MRR: Did you have any problems with the punk image you had? I remember not being served at a bar, the bartender saying, "We don't serve freaks like that."
Bojan: Once we were hitchhiking in Logatec wearing torn jeans. The police came and we had to explain why our jeans were torn. It was silly. How can a kid explain something like that to a cop? But as for the leather, we simply couldn't afford it. I was extremely lucky to get a fabulous motorcycle jacket from a local bum. His name was Drago Lesena Noga (Drago Wooden Leg)—he claimed he was in the French Foreign Legion.

MRR: In your lyrics there was rebellion, of course. But above all there was social awareness.
Dare: We identified with the anti-fascist and anti-racist messages punk brought. It was something new in rock'n'roll. We transferred it to our milieu. In Slovenia, Bosnian workers and Romani people were—and sometimes still are—considered lower race. So I wrote "Vahid" and "Če se Rodiš Cigan" (Born A Gypsy).
Dušan: Dare's lyrics brought general messages through very personal stories. He did it with great intuition.

MRR: You were extremely prolific, the number of songs you wrote is incredible.
Dare: I didn't want us to repeat ourselves. I know it was confusing for our fans, hearing a completely new repertoire each concert.
Dušan: Our concerts usually lasted for no more than twenty minutes.
Dare: Not true. Sometimes they lasted for half an hour. We read that the Ramones played 17 songs in 33 minutes. We wanted to beat that. [laughs]

MRR: One of your qualities was your sound. How did you attain that? Especially considering that you must have had lousy gear.
Bojan: We practiced a lot. We were well-trained. So even when we played drunk there was no problem, we were good.
Dare: No wonder, we practiced drunk too! Our gear was secondhand, you couldn't buy it in a store. I used to be a Jimi Hendrix fan and I desperately wanted a Stratocaster. Finally I found it in Postojna. Dušan bought a fine Ibanez Rickenbacker copy from a local commercial band. And we transported the drums we got in Tolmin by bus.
Dušan: If you had money you could find gear in Gorizia. The proximity of this town was important. Our first punk concert ever was the Dead Kennedys in Gorizia.

MRR: You played at the first Novi Rock, the most important Slovenian alternative festival in the '80s.
Dare: It was our biggest and worst gig. We got lost on the big stage. It's good Radio Ljubljana lost the recording. Šund, Indust-Bag, Buldogi, and Lublanski Psi also played, so it was also a promotion of the *Lepo Je...* compilation. The only three tracks that got released during our time are on that compilation, but they sound terrible. The producer had the idea that we were too slow, probably inspired by the Dead Kennedys. So they sped up our tracks. When we got the record and played it we were frustrated beyond belief. Our drummer Iztok told us that he cried when he heard it.

MRR: It was hard to get your music properly recorded at the time, virtually impossible.
Dare: We recorded twice at Radio Študent in Ljubljana, once for the compilation and the second time for their archive. But it really wasn't what we wanted to sound like. It was a radio broadcast studio, not a proper recording studio and the guys were still learning how that was done. But we recorded many of our rehearsals on cassette tape. Some of them sounded quite okay and we released them along with some live material a couple of years ago. People can download them from our webpage: www.kuzle.si. Then there is the CD/vinyl release *Archived* by Ne! Records from Sweden.

MRR: And the reconstructed CD/vinyl *Še pomnite Kuzle, tovariši?* (*Do You Remember Kuzle, Comrades?* from 2010, on Dallas Records, Slovenia). Why did you do that?
Dare: I felt we had to do it. I wanted those songs to be properly preserved for history. Iztok is a long time studio wizard, both he and I have studios of our own. So there was no reason not to take some time and do it. We used the original recordings to maintain the energy, took what was good from them and re-recorded the rest. With no additional arrangements or too much overdubbing. Bojan was amazing. He hadn't sung for almost 30 years, yet he needed no more than three takes of each song to record them.
Bojan: I remembered everything almost instantly, it was incredible.
Dare: On that album we finally sound the way we wanted to. And the lyrics can be understood.

MRR: Why don't you want to perform concerts? Many Slovenian punk bands have done it in the past years, from Pankrti and Lublanski Psi to Niet, Buldogi, Via Ofenziva, Otroci Socializma, Gnile Duše, and Kuga.
Bojan: We have no intention of making fools of ourselves. We are different people now, we can't do it the way we did it 30 years ago. We don't even meet and play for ourselves, although it might be fun. We recorded the reconstructed album separately. Instead we encouraged four young girls to perform our songs under the name Mlade Kuzle (Young Bitches). All four have experience with punk bands of their own.

MRR: On these releases there are the same 20 or so songs. You mentioned you wrote about 60. Where are the rest?
Bojan: These are the songs we rehearsed and played the most. The rest are mainly forgotten.
Dare: Or too childish. Or not compatible in style—at the end we wrote many reggae songs and other stuff. I remember "Japonska Deklica" (Japanese Girl), our friend Boris Balant wrote the lyrics.
Dušan: It was pure Gang of Four style. It was about a porn toy. The chorus went "Do not remove back side / Danger of electric shock." They were our only lyrics in English.

MRR: The famous Slovenian punk triangle was Idrija-Ljubljana-Metlika, the latter being even smaller and less urban than Idrija.
Dare: We were much closer with Indust-Bag than with any band from Ljubljana. And there were Gnile Duše (Rotten Souls) from Ormož that we befriended. We played twice in Metlika and the reception was incredible. There was a strong backing, Indust-Bag were real heroes in Metlika, much more than us in Idrija.

MRR: Who was a musical hero in Idrija at the time?
Dare: The Rolling Stones. There were no local bands that kids would listen to. Except for us and Šund.

MRR: I heard it was 20 people at most who created the punk scene in Idrija. Who attended your concerts? How many people gathered?
Dare: High school girls. [laughs] The high school gym was full. They didn't have a clue what we were playing but it was good.
Bojan: Wherever we played at the end of the show everybody was enthusiastic. Even at the youth workcamp.

MRR: I heard about that incident. In the end you returned on stage for three encores, but at first they wanted to beat you up.
Bojan: It was in Kobarid. Jožef Školč, now a politician, was one of the leaders. He invited us. The youth from all over Yugoslavia gathered there. Many of them had no knowledge of punk. I wore the "Nazi Punks Fuck Off" badge with the swastika crossed out, the same one that Igor Vidmar was arrested for. A guy ran over to me, tore it off and ran away. Then some gorilla guys started walking slowly towards us with sticks in their hands, yelling, "Nazis!" It was like in the *Night of the Living Dead* movie. If it wasn't for Školč, who intervened, it would have ended badly. Somehow we convinced them it was an anti-Nazi badge and that by no means were we Nazis.
Dare: Lack of information can be fatal. A similar misunderstanding occurred in *Nedeljski Dnevnik*, the major weekly newspaper in the country. They wrote about the allegedly chauvinist youth writing songs with verses like "Vahid, Vahid, go home," telling Bosnian workers to go home. The truth was the opposite: the song is about Vahid (a real person whom we knew) who is saying those words to himself, despairing for not being equal to Slovenians.

MRR: Punk was about rebellion. In the west, it was in many ways social rebellion. In socialist Yugoslavia what was it rebelling against?
Dare: We didn't care about the past. We had our own way. We were teenagers and when punk came it was just what we needed. A revolt against—I don't know what really. Just a revolt.
Bojan: We rebelled against hypocrisy. Our society was socialist and egalitarian in idea and on paper, not in reality.

MRR: Goran Lisica Fox, the famous punk promotor from Rijeka, once said that the main impact punk had on Yugoslav society was the fact that you kids said aloud what everybody was thinking but didn't dare say. And you stayed alive and nothing really bad happened to you, so you showed the people they could

do it. That helped bring out the civil society movement in the '80s and the consequential change of regime.
Dušan: What you say sounds nice, but we weren't thinking about that at the time.
Bojan: Yes, we were against the system, but we weren't thinking in a capitalist way. We were more left-wing than the hypocritical system. You could say we were Leninists or anarchists.

MRR: What about censorship?
Bojan: There was censorship but it was ridiculous. They didn't understand what we were saying. So we made fools of them. There was the "Commission for Trash," that judged books, magazines and records. Trash was taxed higher than the rest. Although intellectuals fought against it, it was absolutely necessary for a punk record to be labeled as such, to be taxed higher. A band would feel benign if it didn't get it.
Dare: But we must admit our rebellion had limits. Before the Novi Rock festival we had a meeting with Mojmir Sepe, the famous pop music composer and editor at the national Radio Ljubljana. He banned our "Še Pomnite Kuzle, Tovariši?" ("Do You Remember Kuzle, Comrades?") song. He claimed it would be an insult to the radio listeners because that was the title of the show in which WWII veterans remembered their fight for national freedom and social change. We said okay.

MRR: So you had to present the setlist and lyrics of the songs you would play before each gig?
Dušan: Yes, we had to take it to the local police station.
Bojan: But they rarely checked it. And if they did, they didn't understand anything. And nobody checked if we really played those songs or really sang those lyrics. Many bands presented what they didn't really play.

MRR: The same as everything else in the system: one way on paper, another way in reality. By the beginning of the '80s everybody in the country was pretending; saying one thing, thinking another and acting something else. It had to end.
Bojan: But people knew how to read between the lines. In "Če se Rodiš Cigan" ("Born A Gypsy") we had the line "Let this system of ours go to hell." While recording at Radio Študent they advised us to change it. Their suggestion was to put "washing machine" instead of "system" and that everybody would understand what we meant. We rewrote it to be, "So I don't fit in this system of ours."

MRR: But you kids probably wanted to have what they had in the west?
Dare: Yes, but the frustration was mainly about music. The lack of good equipment bothered us and that was about it. We lived our lives and didn't care.
Bojan: We had nearly no money at all. But we were satisfied if we could buy a record from time to time. We didn't travel much—the only place abroad I went to was Gorizia. In a way, I didn't miss anything.

Dušan: I think Idrija was special in this regard. It was a self-sufficient town for centuries, everything was there and nobody needed anything else. It probably influenced us too. All we wanted was to play as often as possible. And each gig opened up new worlds for us.

MRR: And before you turned twenty the band had split up.
Dare: The mandatory military service brought down most of the rock bands in Yugoslavia. I went first. When I returned a year later Bojan went, and so on. At that age, years seemed like decades. And after three years, after we all served the country, the world was a different place. We couldn't have continued, it wouldn't have felt right. Each of us was searching for something else.
Bojan: We were frustrated that we couldn't get a record out. To close one chapter and open another, to make new songs, etc. That was one of the problems that prevented us from going on.

MRR: Did you continue making music? Until nowadays?
Dare: We continued throughout the '80s. Dušan and I formed Radio Panoi with the singer of Šund, Robi Pajer. With Bojan we had a duo named Bojler that Iztok produced. And Iztok formed Videosex in Ljubljana.
Dušan: Today I direct documentary films. Many of them are about music. Bojan is a mechanical engineer and an inventor. Iztok and Dare remained in the music business, they are both musicians and music producers.

MRR: What is it with our time and your music that makes it interesting today? What history wheel has gone full circle after 30 years?
Dare: New regime, same shit.
Dušan: The last five years or so were ideal for punk. Nowadays you simply have to be different. And you have to kick ass.
Bojan: I realized through the years that I can be really proud of our music. I never expected there would be such a response to the recent releases.
Dare: We weren't really aware of it, but obviously we had a good feeling for expressing things back then. We knew what was cool and what was not. Our music stood the test of time. We had our explosive two years and that was it. In a way, we did want to change the world. But we wanted the change to come immediately, right there and then. We burned bright and fast. Faced with all the frustration, we finally lost our rush. We felt we didn't have anything else to say. Then we grew up and went on to do other things. That's the whole story.

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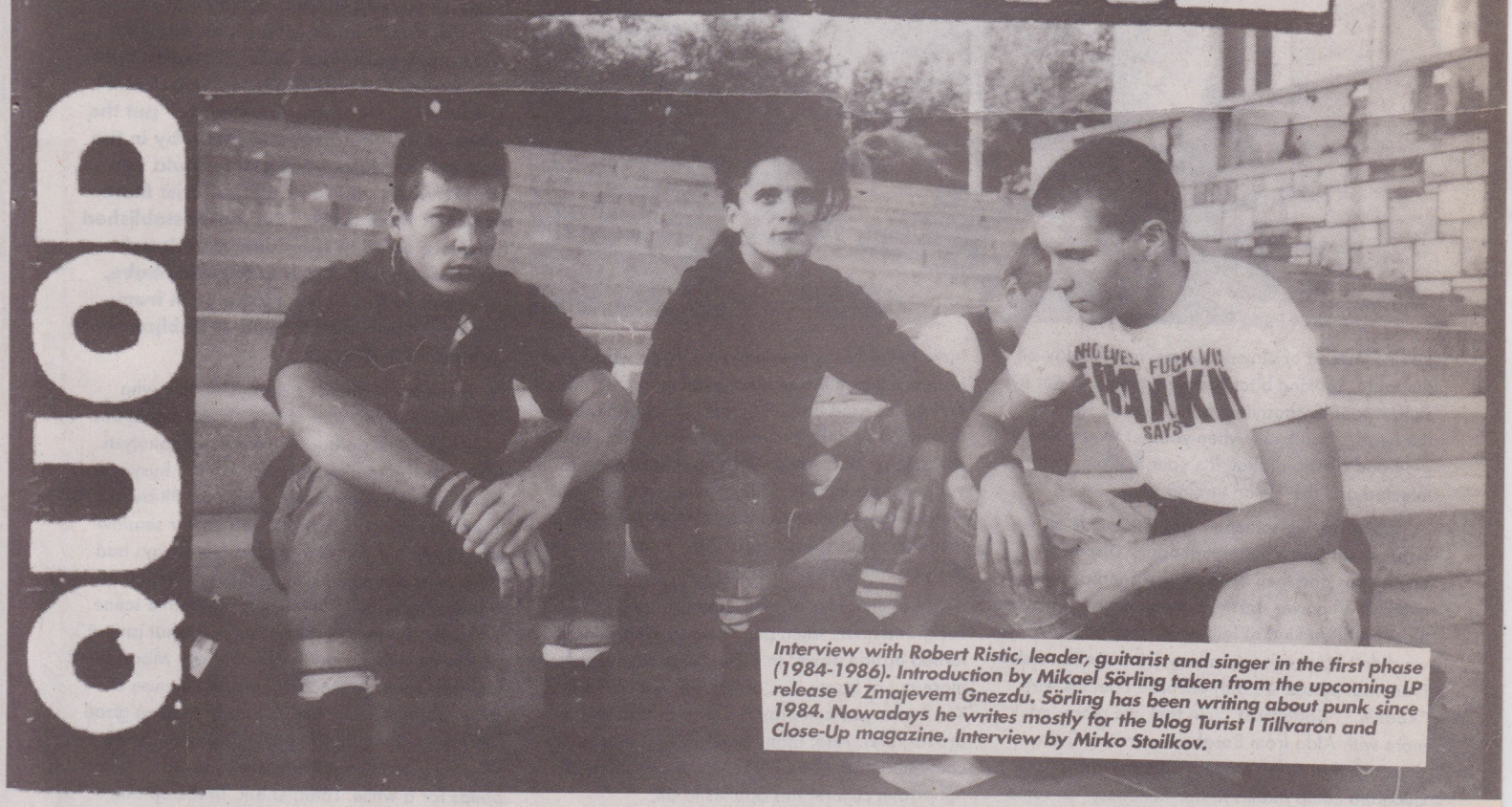


Interview with Robert Ristic, leader, guitarist and singer in the first phase (1984-1986). Introduction by Mikael Sörling taken from the upcoming LP release V Zmajevem Gnezdu. Sörling has been writing about punk since 1984. Nowadays he writes mostly for the blog Turist I Tillvaron and Close-Up magazine. Interview by Mirko Stoilkov.

I heard Quod Massacre for the first time on the Breaking the Silence 7" EP compilation. And right from the start I was trapped in the exciting punk world the band created in their song "Quod Massacre," with their strong and nervous melody—and of course, it was a bit scary talking about a band from the other side of the Iron Curtain.

The EP was released in 1987 and I was a punk rocker from a small town in Sweden who preferred European punk, like Wretched, Disper-Azione, Terveet Kädet, Slam, Kafka Process, and HHH. I corresponded with several other punk rockers around the world, with whom I exchanged cassettes and I had one contact in Yugoslavia, who had previously tipped me off about Tožibabe and U.B.R., who now had to get me the Faith Accomply '83-'86 tape, the one that Maximum Rocknroll euphorically praised.

I couldn't stop listening to it. I fell for the edgy sound built on strong melodies and chaotic guitars, and I fell for Quod Massacre's amazing vocals. You couldn't label them; in my opinion in 1987 they were very distinctive, something that the guitarist Rile was very happy about when I interviewed them the same year for my fanzine Profit Blaskan. "We simply can't label our music. We play whatever we feel like playing," he said in the article.

I have never stopped listening to Quod Massacre. How could I? And it's not about some obsolete nostalgia. In my opinion, they are still relevant. I have often referenced Quod Massacre when writing articles about European punk rock as one of those bands that actually made an impact—along with other giants from the former republic of Yugoslavia, such as Kuzle, Pankrti, Paraf, Pekinška Patka...

MRR: Quod Massacre appeared in the Ljubljana punk scene somewhere between the first and second wave of hardcore bands. U.B.R was the most established band from the first wave (on the *Kaj Je Alternativa* cassette comp) and had an EP released by Attack Punk Records, and the second wave was expected soon (Epidemija, III Kategorija etc). Did you, the members from the first line-up, play anywhere before the formation of Quod Massacre?

Of course we did. In a scene that small, things easily run into each other. Rok P. played with Stres D.A., and I started out as the drummer of the band Depresija, as there were a lot of guitarists but a shortage of drummers. Mare, who joined Quod Massacre early on, played with U.B.R..

Robi H. played with Quod Massacre right from the start, as did Bogdan V. What I'm saying is, a lot of things happened in the beginning but that's normal in music production. What you're looking for is kindred souls and it becomes clear pretty quickly what you want when you have the same drive.

MRR: I'm interested in Quod Massacre's first period, of which we know very little. Luckily a large portion of your early material was somehow saved thanks to the recording of your early gigs, like the concerts in Šiška and Disco FV from 1984. The songs are short, energetic and simple and, I would say, very charming—the first time I listened to Quod Massacre I thought of Negative FX, early 7 Seconds, and similar HC bands. What are your memories from those gigs, those songs and your repertoire? Many of those songs were never recorded in a studio. Why?

Beyond a big desire to play and create music, we were busy trying to find somewhere to rehearse and get our own equipment. So, that was our biggest obstacle. The gig in Šiška was really our first real performance. I remember rehearsing at Bogdan's place in his room, half acoustic, you know.

live Novi rock

Rok P., instead of playing drums, had to play on the table. Looking back today, listening to our live stuff, it sounds charming to me as well, right in the head... You know when you get the chance to play and on top of that, it's your first gig: you get infected and there's no turning back.

Later on, we somehow got our hands on a rehearsal space in the legendary Disco FV on campus and then everything turned around quickly. When we started playing new songs some older stuff just kind of fell away and, additionally, we didn't have enough money for a studio session. From that period we only recorded demos with "Radnik," "Bodočnost"... In fact, we recorded more with Aldo from Borghesia, around five or six songs that never made it onto the *Hard-Core Ljubljana* comp thanks to the "kindness" of some people. Later there came new stuff and the old stuff got lost on the way.

MRR: While the scene in Ljubljana has been influenced by Italy's scene or the Brazilian HC scene, Quod Massacre in no way fits in with that picture: melodic guitar, harmonies, and songs with a more complicated structure. Where do your roots come from? What music did you listen to when the band was formed? I remember that you once named Bad Brains as a significant band, but at the same time in your music you can feel the influence from the New Wave scene in Rijeka. The ends of the songs "Quod Massacre" and "V Oceh" remind me of the atmosphere of bands like Termiti, and "Radnik" of Mrtvi Kanal.

Surely we didn't fit in with that perspective on music. We had the desire to create our own music, our own sound, and it was that that guided us through this story. We believed in what we did and we didn't suffer from the need to sound this way or that. We simply didn't care about any of that stuff. Our musical roots are so broad. Additionally there were people from the FV community—Radio Študent, Igor Vidmar, and others—who have helped us with music. And if you were open to new things there was no problem. I took this all in. I understood that all of this is in your head, and that if you're different you can use that to your advantage. Because everything is in relation to your surroundings and life around you, not your image, how quickly you play and all that. Like a teenager, you're excited, and if you can channel this you will have no problems.

Via, my older brother, and his gang got into rock, and later, when punk hit me, everything got turned upside down. In fact, I have always gotten more out of bands that aren't the best players. You know, you can play this way or that, there are no rules. And, thank god, those bands really confirmed that. Not only in bands or with music, but also in culture: this applies to all.

MRR: You played at the biggest rock festival in Slovenia, Novi Rock. How much did that mean to your future?

Novi Rock was, back then, truly a strong festival. When we got the invitation we were overjoyed. Kri ž Anke is an amazing place for concerts, plus you get medical support. But foremost, it has always attracted a lot of people and it was a fantastic chance for all the bands.

studio 1985

MRR: From the start, Quod Massacre was the target of the so-called hardcore dynasty: some people who used their influence (contacts with international and domestic fanzines, media and labels) to help or ruin bands—depending on how they considered their authority to be threatened. The dynasty perceived the appearance of bands that did not fit in, or give in, as dangerous. What hindrances did Quod Massacre bump into during the time the band was active? Is it time, as Gombrowicz said, to "put the cabbage in the barrel and the baby in the cradle?" Because what mercy could you expect when you took the guitarist Mare Župančič from U.B.R., the most established hardcore band in Ljubljana, you dated the most beautiful Marsa from Tožibabe, you took in the singer Mario Šelih from the most appreciated band in Ljubljana, Ljublanski Psi?

Well, you know, there're always people who have their own version of how things should be. I don't know; it's a question for psychoanalysts. We worked and played and we didn't busy ourselves with what today is know as PR-bullshit. It has always existed, people with similar sensitivities, so when it comes to that we've always had the right support. Everything else is harmful and it doesn't contribute anything good to the scene. It's about showing what's okay and what isn't—it's best to be with us and the rest is crap. Mare didn't go from U.B.R. to Quod Massacre because of some lobby, it happened naturally. I was a good friend with the gang from U.B.R. and there were never any problems, Mare even played with both bands for a while. Later, U.B.R. broke up and that's a question for them. Ha ha, the question about Tožibabe... I have to tell Marsa about your compliment. As for Mario, he came to the band in 1985 after our appearance at Novi Rock. I remember that he came up to us and said, "Guys, this was amazing!" (Despite some of the older punk folk not having been too impressed by the hardcore scene). He continued: "If I had a band it would be like Quod Massacre!" Then I told him he could join.

MRR: For a moment, in an overwhelming amount of bullshit, Quod Massacre was illustrated as a "macho band" (which back then was the worst kind of insult), or then later on as a "queer band," especially with Mario on vocals. I look back at your first singer's Bogdan's colored hair, and your red scarf on the video from your rehearsal space, everything up to the Alain Delon-looking Mario. How much of a conscious choice was it to provoke the HC scene?

Well, we always looked the way we wanted. Provocation is always the most effective when done with subtle methods instead of the obvious things, like getting a mohawk, and that's that. It seems like we had to get some sort of license to

be a hardcore band. You know, there are certain people who think they know how you have to sound or look to be a real hardcore band; at the same time they sing about how we're supposed to not give a fuck about rules. People are full of preconceived notions and that's their problem.

MRR: I get the feeling that Quod Massacre was very respected and probably the most appreciated harcore band outside of Slovenia. How much did the band play outside of ex-Yugoslavia?

You are correct; it was thanks to the band being consistent and the band's attitude. But also thanks to the people who would recognize that and give us support. That was the way Quod Massacre became their story as well. We played where they wanted us to play but when we released our first LP everything changed. The gigs became more regular and we eventually went on tour in Holland, plus a couple of gigs on our way there. And at last the gigs in Yugoslavia and getting recognized there. But I think our first serious gig was in Sarajevo where Custa and Savic gave us a spot in a festival there, and then it all began.

MRR: The lyrics of your songs are poetic and carry with them a personal feeling. That's only a good thing, as it shows that you live close to your true feelings. Have something changed there? How does it look now? How important is the lyrical component in comparison to the musical?

When you are fourteen, fifteen there's some sort of uproar or rage that leads you through your writings. Later, when you've built up your own view on life, that is reflected in your lyrics. For us, the lyrics have been as important as the music. First and foremost they were our stories, our view of the world, our criticism of our surroundings. We knew that things could be told in a different way than just saying, "fuck the system" or "fuck the police". Regarding today, of course there are a lot of good lyrics out there, it's just about getting them out to the people. Today everything is served in a neat package with a bow, but without content. The rich and powerful sell an expensive democracy to the poor. Additionally they dumb us down, so you don't have a population that thinks critically. I have a few lyrics about this...American Dream, the rest is insomnia.

MRR: Concerning official releases from when the band was active, you only have the album commonly known as *Delfin*, released by the Croatian label Search & Enjoy and the cassette *Fait Accomply '83-'86* which includes all of your demo recordings sorted in chronological order. In 2012 came the release of *Kje Je Odgovor!*, by Ne! Records, which was one of the biggest injustices of the second half of the '80s corrected. How much was the creative force of the band hindered by the fact that no album was released, at that time?

Well, it all started with Gvido Obradović and his NPT where he released our earlier stuff on cassette. After that came some compilations, and finally our first real album which was destroyed in a fire in Studio Tivoli. The raw material still exists and a lot of people believe that that is in fact a demo. Currently I'm in the phase where I am collecting all of that material. If anyone has any material (like live recordings, photographs, etc.) they are welcome to get in touch.

Then, Aleksandar Dragaš appeared and offered to release new material with Search & Enjoy, and of course we said yes and released *Delfin*. But, the situation in Yugoslavia got more and more complicated, so all that ended there. Until the persistent Habi (NE! Records) convinced me that our story needed a better ending and we got working on the release of *Kje Je Odgovor!* It's primarily thanks to him that the record was released. All of you who enjoy that scene keep an eye on NE! Records, for that is one excellent label that mostly releases records of bands from the ex-Yu area and makes sure it's properly archived.

MRR: Hardcore lost its authenticity and integrity when it started mixing with heavy metal. I remember the excitement of my friends from Ljubljana when Metallica appeared, and I instantly knew something was smelly. Quod Massacre has always sounded a little heavy, but never crossed the line and has always kept its authenticity, unlike most other bands who either knowingly or unknowingly wanted to sound like their idols from abroad. Considering your respect for the band Bad Brains, it surprises me that you never hear a trace of reggae in your music. How did Quod Massacre function musically? Were the other members involved in creating the music?

That crossover was somehow logical. We were in the same places, same clubs—of course things mix together... Well, I got infected by Bad Brains. That doesn't mean I have to play reggae, even though I really like reggae! Quod Massacre were always their own thing, and we had our move away from classic hardcore. Besides, when you have five wild people it's hard to coordinate the music-creating process. All members are important and they're why Quod Massacre sound like it does. Sometimes it was hard, especially when stuff was unusual, but it eventually balanced out; everything is harmonized and everyone contributes.

MRR: Quod Massacre stopped playing in the beginning of the '90s. Was there any specific reason for the split? What has been going on with you and the band Ego Malfunction after this? What are the chances of a Quod Massacre reunion?

This is a very simple answer, after the events in ex-Yu at least I didn't feel like playing. It wasn't until the mid-'90s that I started playing music seriously again and started the band Ego Malfunction. But that's another story. When it comes to Quod Massacre... Well, never say never. I know there's still much to tell

"...there are certain people who think they know how you have to sound or look to be a real hardcore band; at the same time they sing about how we're supposed to not give a fuck about rules. People are full of preconceived notions and that's their problem."

buldogi

Buldogi was famous for being greeted with greater enthusiasm in other ex-Yugoslavian states than at home. Because of a conflict of interests, at an early age they were already forced to realize that being a prophet among your own people is hard. Numerous concerts in Zagreb (Croatia) were the springboard that started the invasion of the southeast: they performed at the Subotica Youth Festival in 1980, facing exclusion due to "immoral behavior." Next came Sava Center in Belgrade, and also the infamous New Year's Eve concert in Novi Sad's Sports Center (both in Serbia). Due to enlistment in the Yugoslavian army, there followed a hibernation period which lasted 27 years! Following the 2009 all-Slovenian uprising, Buldogi first re-recorded their old music on Rektospektiva 1979-1982. *Now the rectum was cleansed and they could focus on the head—you could say that there were even more subjects in desperate need of criticism now than there were when the band started.*

The debut album managed to get the attention of listeners and the media alike, despite it being released with a thirty-year delay. This was probably due in part to successful self-promotion from the "oh-not-so-young anymore" band members at their many club concerts. Buldogi are not a group that was content with the release of their long-in-the-making debut (an assembly of their early music). They decided to take it a step further and release a second album. The band travelled the same road as many of the groups belonging to the now legendary Ljubljana punk wave: a short period of activity without releasing anything, leading to a break-up.

Along with Pankrti, Kuzle, Lublanski Psi, Šund, and Grupa 92, Buldogi belong to the first wave of Ljubljana punk. The end of the '70s and the beginning of the '80s was an ideal time for the development of punk in then-socialist Slovenia, and now the time is obviously ripe for new observant and critical remarks from formerly perceptive and angry young men. In the meantime, these young men have grown up. The political regime fell soon after the majority of the nation's punk bands broke up, and it was replaced by neoliberal capitalism, which in this sorry sociopolitical atmosphere once again offers a place for a critical and revolutionary stance. Buldogi is one of the rare punk bands originating from Ljubljana that is honestly dealing with the current situation, not just passing time by nostalgically remembering the old times like many other former punkers do. Proof of that is the new album simply named Ni Lepo *(which translates* to It's Not Nice*), an obvious reference to the legendary compilation album of Slovenian punk from the eighties titled* Lepo je… (It's nice…)*, which Buldogi contributed three songs to.*

Ni Lepo *is an album with which Buldogi truly returns to the national music scene, containing no less than eleven new songs. The songs, mostly done in a punk rock style, examine various national and global anomalies. With striking songs like "Dvign glavo" ("Raise Yer Head"), "Svetilnik stoletja" ("The Centurial Lighthouse"), "Kolk rabš?" ("How Much Na Need?"), the Bulldogs present themselves in an incredibly fresh and youthful form, bursting with the accumulated musical experience of the reanimated punkers, pointing to the futility of modern day life with their sharp and condemning lyrics. But it's not only a youthful revolt that is expressed in their lyrics; these are these world views of a generation that fought for a better tomorrow and got stuck in a cruel today. Their new album, with its quality retro approach and fresh energy, revives the legendary era of Ljubljana punk and universal problems of modern society. Enjoy the latest special interview with all of the group members. Originally from Yugoslavia, 1979-1982. Reunited in Slovenia in 2009. Introduction by Damjan Zorc.*

Fresh old crew:
Damjan Zorc (frontman) Rok Zupan (guitar)
Blaz Grm (drums) Janez Fifolt (bass)

MRR: Concerning ex-Yu punk history, you're the only band being re-born after so many years… 27 years of hibernation?
Rok: We were clearly the youngest band at that time…not only in former Yugoslavia but also in the whole Balkan region and, as far as I know, we can add Central Europe at least. Those were the insecure times for our country, President Tito was dying, so the socialist regime was a bit confused, and you know what happens with a wounded lion…
Janez: You need new idols and lots of their influences when you start a band at fourteen years of age. Don't forget, the Sex Pistols started only two years before! There was a special student radio station in our capital city of Ljubljana, a kind of renegade, underground radio, where we'd listened to new music and recorded it.
Damjan: And we had access to Radio Luxembourg, which was not the case in other "red" countries... I heard the Clash there, which convinced me to become a punk… and remain so!

MRR: Someone said it's too late to be a punk when you're closing in on 50… What's your opinion?
Damjan: It seems I know that moron. It's the same guy who thinks one should betray all former ideals just to get a more "serious" public image. Nothing's more ridiculous in this world full of hypocrisy than trying to get a serious outlook and hide beneath the mask of common people. Come on! It's not the tie and suit that makes a man wise, it's his attitude towards life and society. We were always the whistle-blowers when something went wrong around us… Why not in our 50s? In fact, it's much easier to do so now than during the teenage period…
Janez: Please, just don't you get serious…
All: [laughter]

MRR: You have told me it's the third time in recent history that Western media is analyzing the ex-Yu punk scene? Why do you think this is?
Damjan: Maybe we should explain to American readers that criticizing socialism in our early phase was not much different from what we're doing nowadays—criticizing capitalism. We continue to stay on the side of the commons, on the side of small men… In fact, we are still trying to reunite them, to gather against sleazy governments and corporations, which spend incredible amounts of money and time just to wash our brains during our everyday struggle…so they can press us down close to the ground again and again…
Blaz: Speaking of the devil, I will gently try to correct the mistaken old American fear of communism. The whole of human history has yet to witness a communist society… "Communism" maybe existed at the dawn of humanity, but the last time we were all equal was when we climbed down from the trees. Since then we can only dream of the idea of communism. What we'd fought against was mere socialism, which is miles away… Open your own minds, Americans! If anyone, you should remember Senator McCarthy, washing your brains out by using fear of the unknown—that's one of the governmental methods that Damjan spoke of before…
Damjan: And remember also that we've experienced and fought against both socialism and capitalism. So you shall not argue with us!
All: [Laughter]
Damjan: Well, maybe we should add yet another geopolitical lesson about life beneath the Iron Curtain: even with socialism not every country was the same! We should split former socialist countries in the '70s or '80s into two very distinctive groups. There was the much larger Orthodox-Communist group in the former Soviet Union and its satellites, such as Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria etc., which were much more like the American view of how life behind the Iron Curtain looked like. The other group was the so-called "socialism with a human face," which was the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), in which we experienced life that was more like the West: freedom to travel abroad, public criticism, consumer society etc. Although, from time to time, we endured lack of some goods, like proper musical instruments, bananas, coffee, and gas fuel, though we had money to buy them in neighboring countries like Italy or Austria. But still, we wanted more and better. If I try to put it shortly: back then, we were angry simply because we didn't have the possibility of political choice; now we're angry because we've got enough and more of it…

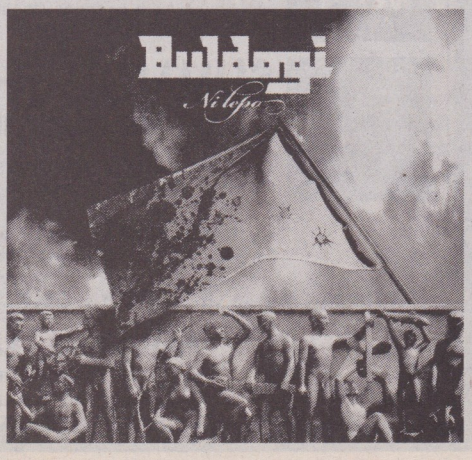
MRR: I heard there was no way to buy a proper electric guitar in a music stores at that point.
Rok: In the beginning we were all smugglers. We smuggled drums, bass, and my guitar from the West. My Stratocaster, which is still in use today as we speak, was a real miracle among the punks. It actually also defined the slightly softer sound of our band in general, in comparison to other punk bands from that time. It was a funny combination, and our first lyrics were also softer, reflecting life through the eyes of a teenager. Therefore, we fought directly with problems of our own, not the problems of adults. In fact, our essential point was always "state of the art" criticism, and it stays the same way even now. Except, we're far from being teenagers now…
Janez: Talking of soft stuff: as teenagers we were hard in our pants and soft in our souls. Now it's vice versa!

MRR: So, in between your first recordings on *It's Nice* and the latest *CD It's Not Nice*, one could say the times, they are a-changin'?
Damjan: Let Dylan alone, please, he's now in a worse situation than we are… The grandpa!
Janez: I'll never forget certain reproaches we faced during the early stages. We were fourteen, fifteen years old and musical critics kept saying, "Maybe you're not heavy enough for a punk band!" Well, after our reincarnation into "second life," something happened, obviously… We gained three hundred pounds of weight between us. So, who's not heavy enough now?

MRR: Let's talk about the present day. How is it going? What's the "alternative scene" like?
Rok: From a musical point of view it is all much easier; to produce, to perform… The problem is that everything is too easy to get for free; I mean… pirates and so on. For the youngsters who wish to start a band these days, it is almost impossible to earn a living. There is a never-ending list of stages and places that are hard to fill with forty or fifty visitors now. Everybody from the "computer generation" would rather stay at private parties; they simply don't distinguish between live performance and mp3…
Janez: Also the quality of sound is not important anymore, nobody buys CDs etc. Luckily, we have come a long way from being "bread-fighters," so we are kind of self-sponsored. It appears that, at the end of the day, we pay our pocket money for a performance, instead of earning from it. But, as I say, we don't need to complain, whatsoever—it's our life and we enjoy it…

MRR: Are you trying to tell me your future as a band is not endangered? I've also heard your new lyrics are written in English for the first time… Do I smell expansion? Europe, maybe? Expecting an American invitation?
Damjan: What can we say… I'm starting to think you'll get a Pulitzer for this interview, man! I mean it! [laughter]

Contact: soundcloud.com/bostbass/sets/buldogi



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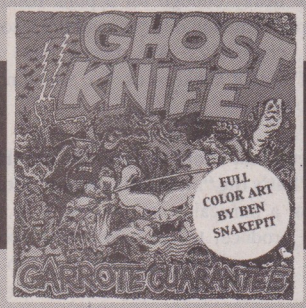

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A // PEACE!

In the world of punk, hardcore, and rock'n'roll in Slovenia and former Yugoslavia, there is no record label as exceptional as FV Music. Formed by members of Borghesia and the people around them, FV Music has been run alone for a long time by a little redhead, full of vigor and energy, called Monika Skaberne. FV music has an incomparable catalogue of releases, concert promotions, and many other activities.

It's not only the oldest independent record label and promoting agency in Slovenia—its achievements are such, they would be difficult to overstate. Monika, whose other achievements are so broad and numerous they would take too many pages to write down, can without a doubt be called the godmother of rock'n'roll in Slovenia. She has been there from the beginning. While everybody else pulled out sooner or later, she persevered and pushed FV Music into the future—even if the future wasn't always very promising.

The present is not very bright for rock'n'roll in Slovenia. People would rather sit at home in front of computers and televisions than attend concerts. After all, they can see it all on YouTube. Many think that bands should play for free, as if they don't have bills to pay at home or as if they don't need to purchase fuel to get themselves to the club. The general attitude towards music and musicians is horrible. Luckily there is still a small group of enthusiasts who support the scene and keep it alive (although barely) and FV Music is the flag bearer. I talked to Monika Skaberne about this flag bearing business. Interview by Sabina Kraner.

MRR: How was FV Music established and when?
FV Music was established in 1985 as FV Records, mostly because of a distinct lack of interest from the then (mostly state) record labels in alternative music. Because of the enormous amount of non-commercial bands of all kinds, the need for releases from the alternative scene was growing. In the whole of Yugoslavia at that time there was no such record label.

MRR: Who were the founders?
The founders were mostly members of the currently world-famous electro band Borghesia, which released a new album this year called *And Man Created God*. It wasn't released by FV this time, it came out on Metropolis Records, but FV published their best of in 2009 called *20. Stoletje – Izbrana dela* (*20th Century – Selected Works*). The first release by FV Publishing was a vinyl record of Borghesia—*Ljubav Je Hladnija Od Smrti* (*Love is Colder Than Death*).

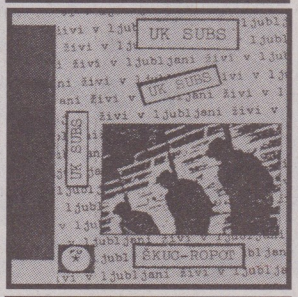
MRR: When did you join the team?
I was there practically from the beginning. I joined as a worker bee in distribution. I was taking and sending out mailorder and

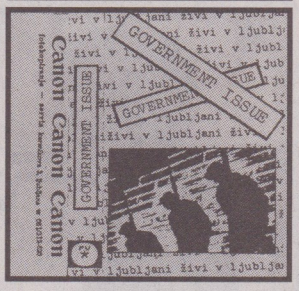
delivering the ordered merchandise to the stores. Because the scene was strong and homogeneous and also demand for such music was big, a lot of stores all over Yugoslavia were ordering FV editions at that time.

MRR: What was it like to establish an independent record label at that time in Yugoslavia?
I think there was no big problem about it. For instance FV Records was active within the association of organizations called ŠKUC Forum, so it didn't have to be registered, or need a bank account and stamp. It was just one of the many sections of ŠKUC.

MRR: What activities has FV engaged in since its establishment?
There were a lot of activities across all of these years (FV Records was renamed FV Music in 1988). FV was publishing music of Slovenian and foreign groups. It was engaged in distribution, mailorder, management, booking, PR, the organization of concerts and tours of domestic and foreign rock groups, the organization of various international multimedia cultural exchange, organization and co-organization of music festivals, and much more.

MRR: In your opinion, which are the most important releases and achievements of FV?
Most important! Uh! It's hard to say. Many releases are important. From the first ones to the last ones. OK, maybe Tožibabe, *Hard-Core Ljubljana*, the first Eastern European release of the cult band the Residents, the *Vsi Živi* cassette compilation with concert recordings from Ljubljana. Then first editions of poets who read their own poetry to the music—so Jure Detela was preserved. Also Dicky B. Hardy and Hic et Nunc records and two six-week long American coast to coast tours. FV also got an award called Maršev Gojzar in 1999, for achievements in the field of domestic rock and other inventive music in 1998, but mostly because of a US tour the year before. It was the first US tour of some Slovenian rock band. There is also the Gala Hala club's first year-and-a-half after Metelkova was tunred into an autonomous social and cultural center. This is not all of course. Too much to mention.





MRR: How long have you been running FV on your own?
Since 1988.

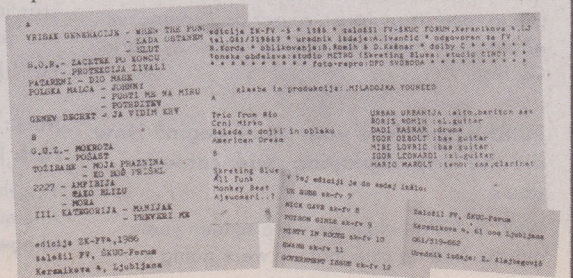
MRR: And what keeps you in it?
Rock'n'roll.

MRR: Is there any difference between running the label then and nowadays? Are conditions now more or less favorable for independent labels?
The difference is, that today (luckily) you have many labels and concert promotors like that. Back then in Yugoslavia it was hard to get to good music, even if you had money. Today everything is free on the internet. The scene back then was much more unified and connected. We fought and did everything for the scene. Not for ourselves or the money. Those were rebelling days. Today is not. Unfortunately there's such apathy in the air that you can not chance anything anymore. Even though they say it's the 99% of us that are run and fucked in the heads by moneybags, even if it were only 9% of us, we should still change something.

MRR: One of FV's activities is also the organization of the well known FV Festival, which brings many important performers together.
This year, at the 15th edition of the festival, the headliners will be surfers the Bambi Molesters who will celebrate their 20th anniversary. In the past, the festival also brought Dead Moon, the Bellrays, Jim Jones Revue, Supersuckers, Heavy Trash, the Fuzztones, Baby Woodrose, Guitar Wolf, P.W. Long... Actually we have organized festivals before, every year, just under different names.

MRR: What is the difference between the rock'n'roll scene in Slovenia today and in the past?
In Slovenia there never were a lot of really good rock'n'roll bands, and I have no clue why. It's probably connected to the fact that there's practically no media to play and promote this kind of music. We have Radio Študent, the *Aritmija* show on national TV and one or two real rock'n'roll internet sites. But this is not enough. All the other media outlets play and promote the biggest possible shit.

MRR: Your plans for the future?
Plans are to try to get through the upcoming years, and we will see what happens. I didn't completely give up. I hope it will be better, because it can not be worse.



INDUST-BAG

Today we know that Indust-Bag is a band that doesn't give up. They play despite time passing, because for them it is a joy, yet also they have a great need to express themselves in their own poetic underground/alternative rock scene. They have never been pushed into one specific genre—they have their own sound and they knowingly make their songs different so as to keep their music varied.

The band has already played for a long time and the story from the beginning up until today would be too long to tell. Since their anthological and biographical LP Zavržena Mladost (NE! Records, 2013) was released not so long ago, we became interested in their early years, about going through all the problems that arise for beginners, and when they became a recognized Slovenian punk band. I spoke with Goran Jarnevič, the founder of the group, and its guitarist, singer and composer, about all of that. Intro and Interview by Dario Cortese.

MRR: When does your story begin? How did the idea of playing punk come to you?

Well, in 1978—when we were sixteen years old—we had no clue that we were going to become punks, we were actually kind of confused about what punk even was. Andrej and I had already done some rock'n'roll stuff. Before we got electric guitars we acted crazy with our acoustic guitars: we hit our strings like mad troubadours. We thought that it was just like that, that you had to hit for it to be something new and special. Occasionally we had a drummer—some friends that beat on chairs and buckets, so we can't say that Indust-Bag was a serious band back in 1978. Yet, it was important that we had some sense of a band, for it was the reason why we gathered together and hung out. We believed that we had something; that we could write our own songs and not only play covers. In Metlika, the place we grew up, there was already a group of people who played covers of "light pop" and bands like Cream, Hendrix and the Rolling Stones, but no one dared play their own songs, something energetic and pure. I still think it's important that you do not make a name for yourself based on other people's works.

MRR: That means that there were other rock bands in Metlika before you.

Yes, the local bands in Metlika were our first role models, and at the same time the example of how not to do it... Hmm, how did it all begin? It all really started around 1978-79, and mostly because of Radio Študent (the alternative radio from Ljubljana), that played punk songs. We heard Pankrti and compared our songs to other bands and we realized that we weren't that far off with our own rock'n'roll songs (like "Tuji Hram", "Labirint," "Zatvor," "Ostali Ste Isti"...). Those are songs that were never recorded but now I think I can easily say that we were, even back then with those songs, an underground rock'n'roll band.

I was lucky that my best friend Andrej Pečarič (rhythm guitarist and singer) was in Ljubljana and that he recorded all the important programs from Radio Študent with his cassette recorder. Radio Študent could only be heard in Ljubljana and the close neighboring areas.

Hearing simple punk, like Sex Pistols and *Never Mind the Bollocks*, after these more complex, bands like Led Zeppelin, Hendrix, The Doors etc.—it's amazing. You become infected and there is no return. Then, after several years you realize that Iggy Pop was even more important, but anyway...That's what I think... But as far as the interest in punk it was the Sex Pistols that were the guiltiest.

MRR: As we know how the city of Metlika and its scene was back then in relation to Ljubljana, it's pretty unbelievable how you managed to get to the front lines of the Slovenian punk and New Wave scene. What happened seems like a scenario from your teenage dreams.

Andrej went to high school in Ljubljana and he continuously came back with news about the goings-on there. I was a tad more musically gifted, technically—I knew how to play more riffs, for example—and I was interested in poetry quite early in high school. I took musical classes in high school for four years.

We were always together, Andrej and I. We read music magazines, mostly the ex-Yugoslavian *Džuboks*, the biggest music magazine in the country, and somehow we managed to educate ourselves in that direction.

MRR: How did the political situation in the country influence you as local rebels of your generation?

Hmm... The political situation was, in a way, quite weird in our country back then. On the one hand we had a pretty much Red totalitarian system; on the other, a socialist view on

everything. It was in Slovenia that it all started: a discontentment because of the restricted freedom of speech. There a desire for the West occurred. Yet, we were more liberal than other parts of Yugoslavia, they didn't punish us for every word out of line... Still, censorship existed everywhere, even in music, for we had a "Commission for Trash." Their job was to put a special tax on music they deemed to be trash.

It happened that walls were spray-painted and flags where ripped, it was the youth's rebellion and none of us believed it to be a movement in Slovenia or other parts of Yugoslavia, but now we know that, in fact, it was.

MRR: I get the feeling that after that, up until today, there was nothing in rock'n'roll that exceeded the power of the movement in Slovenia and Yugoslavia. The fact that it wasn't just about music, but politics as well.

Exactly. After punk, up until today, nothing severe has happened, nothing that you could count as a movement or as rebellious in the Slovenian scene. That's the truth. But leaving out the music, it seems that the punk is actually non-political... more of an anarchistic party, ha ha. Even though there is more reason to be political... It's better we keep talking about real rock'n'roll, it never dies...

[Here Goran downs an entire beer, you can't do it without the alcohol...]

MRR: Good, where did we leave Indust-Bag? What happened later?

We got our drummer, Bojan Vraničar (two years younger than Andrej and I). At that time he had just bought a Yamaha drum kit. That was his big dream. We were very lucky to come across a rehearsal room, for they had just closed down the youth center that had a disco club and they started up a new reorganization for youths in Slovenia. We used that mess to lobby for that space that is, even today, owned by the municipality of Metlika. Even today in some half-legal but completely emotional way we still rehearse there. Imagine, after 35 years have passed!

On the train on our way from Metlika to Novo Mesto we came up with the name for the band, made up of the first letter of each of our names and potential members... The first part of the band name we already had, so we add Bojan, Andrej, Goran—B A G.

MRR: When you finally had a name and stable line-up, how was the situation in you town? How were you received, did you have any fans?

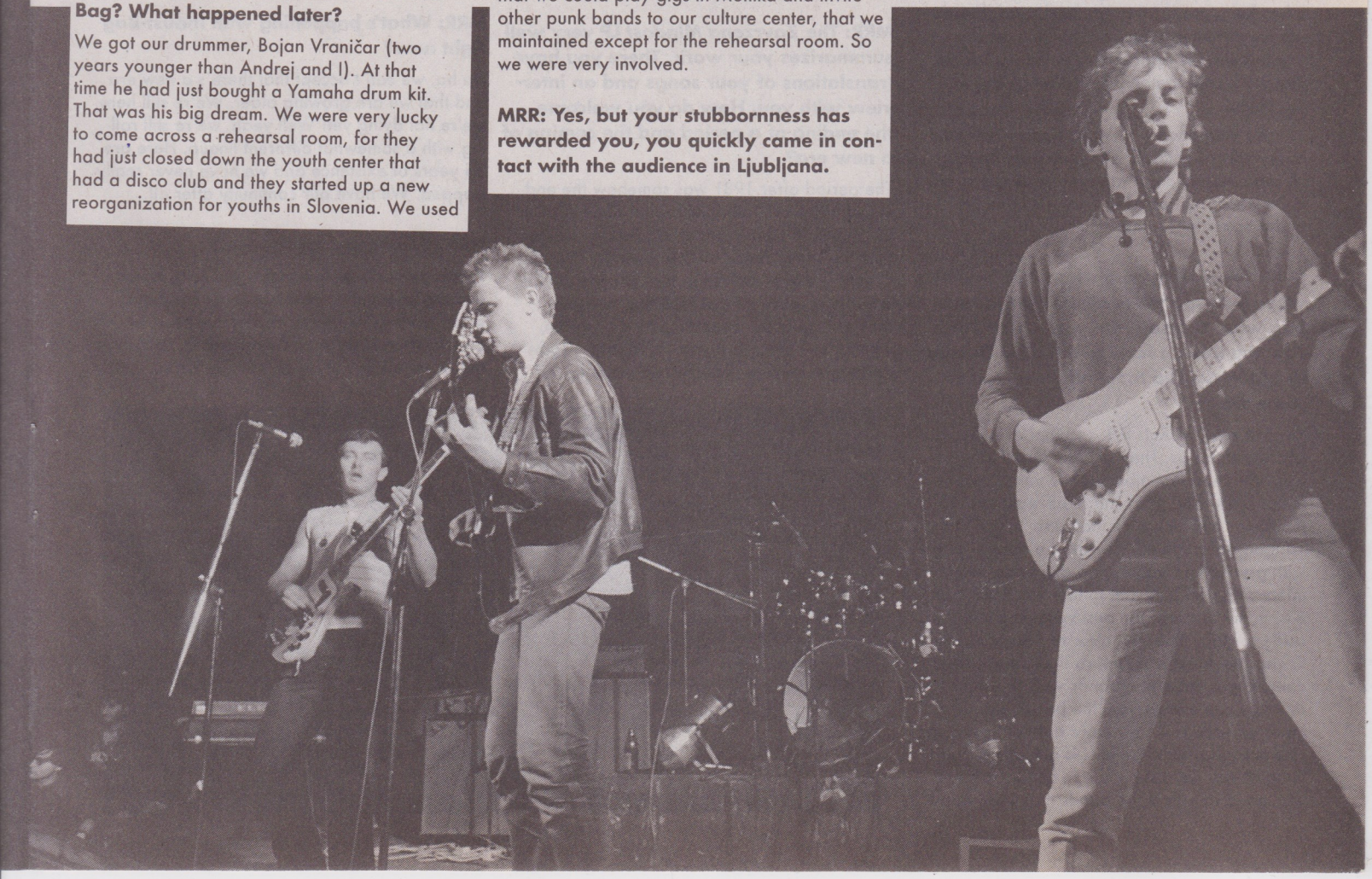
In Metlika and Beli Krajina we had a sort of local patriotism. Metlika is a very small town (maybe even the smallest one in the entire world) and way out south in Slovenia. Back then to find people who knew how to tune, or who had a good amp or other musical equipment, was next to impossible. There was nowhere to buy this sort of stuff or learn anything about it. In bigger cities they had more comfort, unlike us who lived in provinces. But right from the start we were pushed and our audience quickly grew even when we only played in local places. Poetry was something new, but eh, what does the peasant know about it, as you say? 90% of our fans didn't even know what punk, and all of that, was. Nevertheless, they faithfully followed us thanks to our crazy adventures and insane stories so that we could play gigs in Metlika and invite other punk bands to our culture center, that we maintained except for the rehearsal room. So we were very involved.

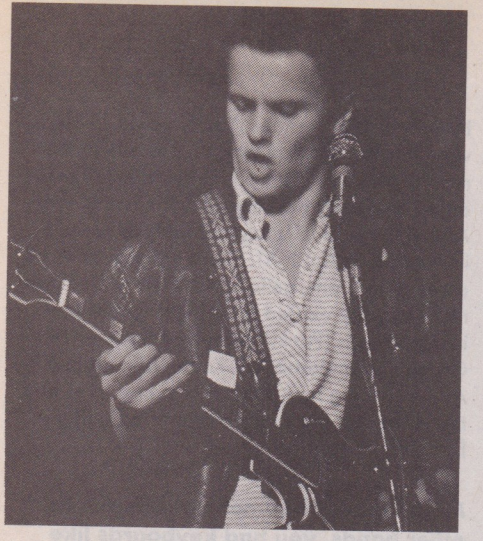
MRR: Yes, but your stubbornness has rewarded you, you quickly came in contact with the audience in Ljubljana.

Hmm, quickly, perhaps. Yes or no, in 1980 we recorded our first song on cassette in the rehearsal room. It's a pity that it doesn't exist anymore. It was because of that cassette that Andrej brought to Ljubljana, that we got a gig in Filo-faks in April '81. There we proved to be a new good, energetic band. Then in Ljubljana there already existed bands with good quality recordings (Pankrti from way back when, Grupa 92, Lublanski Psi, Kuzle from Idrija.). At our first gig Igor Vidmar came up to us and thanks to that gig everything started going forwards for us.

MRR: You were somehow different to other bands, you had keyboards like Termiti and Grupa 92. Were they your role models or were you contemporaries?

No, no. We had Toni Šturm on keyboard and he came on later. Before him came the bassist Srečko Kočevar, who during our time with us learned how to play bass. He played with us when we were still only playing local gigs, but solidified his talent later. Toni was a member of our band from the beginning but we didn't get him to play keyboard until later. Our deal with him was that if we ever needed a keyboardist he would get the job. We hadn't even heard the other bands when we got started, except for the Stranglers and the very important band Buldožer.





We count April 1980 as our real beginning, with all our members and our most known songs ("100 dB," "Ti Si Stroj," "Z Glavo Ob Beton," "Pismo Za Drago," "Notranja Napetost," "Postopek"), even if most of the songs where written back in '78-'79. We had heard of Termiti, that's correct, but our sound in the beginning was punk'n'roll and it wasn't until later that we got a keyboardist.

May 25th, 1981 when we played at the student dorms, Vidmar came up to us and saw our keyboard and asked, "Where are you going guys? Are you a symphony orchestra?" That I remember very clearly, and it's a nice memory, because after a good gig there Vidmar encouraged the keyboard in our production, and later on the compilation LP Lepo Je... and on our first recording at Radio Študent. It has been proved that our keyboard doesn't reduce our energy and our outlook on our music—quite the opposite. I think it was good that we found another way to break out with our sound.

We were more, y' know, right-in-the-heart angry sort of guitar-driven band, but on the LP *Lepo Je...* and our other early stuff it's not quite what you hear, but well, it's all in the eye of the beholder I guess...

MRR: Okay, let's go back to 1980—that's when you say the real start for Indust-Bag was. You say that was when you saw the Ruts, a foreign band, in Tivoliju in Ljubljana. Did they influence you in some way?

Yes, we saw the Ruts live and that evening was impressive for us. They and the Dead Kennedys, with their first album, were very important for us back then. They made us realize that there was more to punk than just "oi, oi!" or "gabba gabba hey!" They had a deeper anger with psychedelic vocals and can be extremely interesting and pleasant to listen to. Even today it is, in my opinion, the best voice in punk, aside for Iggy Pop. But also the late Malcolm Owen (the Ruts) was superb in his area. Musically, it was those two bands who showed us that you can evolve from the basics and what more you can do. They were our contemporary role models which I believe is actually a good thing—if you were a bit late in on the scene it was good to follow the bands that were popular then, and they are very close to the heart.

In September 1981 we played at the biggest festival in Slovenia, Novi Rock in Križanke, and that was the end of our first period as a band. Everything happened so amazingly fast, but luckily we weren't late and everything went as good as it could have. All our recordings and concerts were thanks to Igor Vidmar, the father of the Slovenian punk scene.

MRR: How did other bands, who were also part of the scene, perceive you?

We had the best knowledge of bands from the other provinces: Kuzle and Šund from Idrija, and Gnile Duše from Ormož, but we had good contact with Buldogi and Ljublanski Psi.

Pankrti was from a much older generation than us, guys already studying at university. We, compared to them, were just punk kids. Our keyboardist was only fifteen, and the rest were around seventeen to eighteen. I think that Grega Tomc and Pankrti, together with Igor Vidmar, where the main reasons that punk even became established in Slovenia. But, if it weren't for the newer bands, us among them, it would never have gotten the upswing it did. We got to enjoy what Pankrti started, kudos to them. Our generations of bands have used what they gave us maximally, both in the friendly and the creative way. We have really understood each other; there was no jealousy or malicious competition that you can see today (capital is death and capitalism is the structure of society, something which I do not stand behind—it's bullshit).

MRR: The *Zavrzena Mladost* LP very well summarizes your work. There you have translations of your songs and an interview with you. How do you welcome the ending of a period and the coming of a new era?

The period after 1981 was somehow the ending of many of the bands from that time: all of us went to the army and it seemed for us then that our state, Yugoslavia, knowingly did this. With this they were going to erase the youths' and the creative minds' rebellion because they sent us away according to a program, without us having a say in the matter. Youths and eighteen-year-olds finished school and were then immediately sent away. If a young band with ideas and support from fans cancels playing while they are in full force, there is no rescue.

We got an offer for our own album from the state-owned label RTV ZKP, but because of departure to the army we were never able to record this. But despite all of this, we still continued playing after '81.

From the army I sent new lyrics to Andrej and he made them into music in the best manner (thank God he had to repeat a year in school so that he didn't go to the army the same year as I did!) and it was our contribution to the coming hardcore punk scene in the best way. On the LP *Zavrzena Mladost* there are four songs from the concert with Pankrti at Tivoliju 1982. From those recordings the bass guitar is hard to hear because of the clumpy recording. Approximately eighteen months after I went to the army it was Andrej's turn and that was the end of our first period as a band.

MRR: Are you happy with the *Zavrzena Mladost* album?

For us it is very important to be a part of NE! Records, to be able to preserve and document the old recordings so that they don't end up laying in some historical dumping site, and so that we get at least a somewhat clearer picture of our band, one that was so promising in 1981 but was cut off prematurely—something that has happened to many other bands from this period as well.

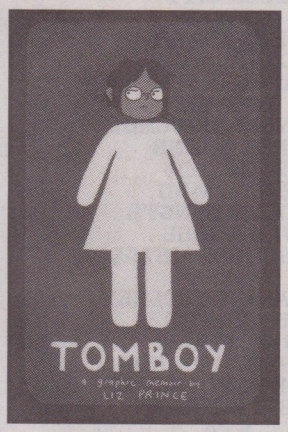
MRR: What's happening with Indust-Bag right now?

Ha ha, we can't accept that there's a new era and that we are growing older. We're still here, we're not dying yet! Well yeah, we're still rolling with a somewhat different lineup. Here are 35 years of existence and we have never really stopped. We have our continuity after all.

MRR: Something for the end?

Thanks to MRR for the space you've given us and this moment of remembrance. For those who follow us: we'll see you at our next concert and you can expect a new release in 2015. We still want, we're still able, and that's that.

BOOKS



Tomboy
Liz Prince
256 pages • $15.99
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www.zestbooks.com

Liz Prince is the Ergs! of comic artists. Now, either that comparison makes absolutely no sense to you, or you're thinking "Whoa there, that's some heavy stuff you're throwing around!" But Prince is having (what I hope is) a great year, what with this being her second book published since February. Two books, one year, no filler. Not to mention her bi-monthly contributions to *Razorcake* magazine, and her section in the Mitch Clem edited *As You Were #3* punk comix anthology. She keeps cranking out heavy-hitting, quality material at a startling pace... just like the Ergs! used to do (more on this harebrained and tragically pop punk analogy later).

Tomboy is Prince's fourth graphic novel, following 2005's Ignatz Award winning *Will You Still Love Me If I Wet the Bed*, 2007's *Delayed Replays*, and *Alone Forever* from earlier this year. Having already penned the *perfect* A-side/B-side of relationship-themed graphic novels with *WYSLMIIWTB* and *Alone Forever*, Prince tackles her childhood and adolescence in *Tomboy* with the same mix of approachability and gut-wrenching honesty.

If you strip everything away, *Tomboy* is a classic coming-of-age story. It's a story of figuring out not only who you are, but who you aren't. What gives *Tomboy* its utterly unique and enchanting charm is that the story centers around something more than just a prosaic recounting of Prince transitioning from girl to woman. While Prince is the central figure in this autobiographical comic, the real main character is actually gender itself, as formed by contemporary American society.

When looking back at my own pubescence and the confusion I personally had with gender issues—not being sure if I was *really* a "boy"—I wish I had the aplomb and humor that Prince does in recreating on paper the terror and disorientation of being a self-identified tomboy in a world of girls who enjoy being girls, boys who remind her that she isn't a boy, and adults who demand you behave the way your gender is "supposed to." The humor she uses in retelling the fear and uncertainty in who she was as a child and young woman is amazing, and makes for genuinely laugh-out-loud moments of empathy. Never crossing into pure comedy, the lightheartedness keeps you from feeling pity while also never making the things that happen to the Li'l Prince a punchline.

The sketchbook style art lives somewhere between the twee minimalism of Jeffrey Brown and the DIY punk simplicity of Ben Snakepit and gives the story a sort of unassuming universal accessibility. Prince manages to convey the exact amount of emotion and action needed for each panel to function with the least amount of line work—that is not to say that it's crude or lazy art, but rather, art that is beautifully succinct. It feels and reads like a sketched diary of sorts—only the most important things to remember later are put on paper—but with a narrative pacing and formatting that is anything but coincidental.

What is most wonderful about *Tomboy* is that it's far from being yet another entry into the vast library of pandering, condescending "Don't worry kid, it will get better... after all, *I* survived" books about youth for youths. While Prince definitely recalls the horrors, heartbreaks, and frustrations of growing up, she never once comes off as actually being "grown up." (And while I don't know her personally, I'm sure she'll probably take that as a compliment—I definitely mean it as such!) Even though I know full well that she is an adult of my own age, whose career and work I have been following for nearly a decade now, the voice and perspective she uses to tell her life's story is never one of learned or cynical detachment. If I was presented this graphic novel as a xeroxed zine with zero context or information about the author, and without the epilogue, I would guess that it was probably coming from a woman just out of high school or possibly college. Yes, I would have to ignore the plethora of '90s references, but whatever. That's not the point I'm trying to make here! There is never the sense of distance from the content that most memoirs seem to have. *Tomboy* has the feel of a friend telling you a story that happened not that long ago. By not focusing on reflecting on the past as much re-telling it. Prince somehow manages to give her memoir a sense of urgency, a sense of *now*.

We live in a time where the question of what defines gender is at an all time high in the national discourse. Laverne Cox is on the cover of *Time* magazine with the headline "The Transgender Tipping Point: America's next civil rights frontier." Social media is making cases of harassment/discrimination/abuse of non-stereotypically gender conforming persons such as CeCe McDonald viral points of social and political conversation. *Tomboy*, whether purposefully attempting to be part of this zeitgeist or not, reminds us exactly how completely fluid gender and its presentation can be.

Prince takes this incredibly nuanced (and often times politically heavy-handed) issue and wraps it up in a way that you can present to both an insecure adolescent looking for a friend, or a Baby Boomer steadfast in their social beliefs. And you wouldn't come off as pushing a politicized social agenda either time. If anything, *Tomboy* shows the inherent confusion and social construct that is gender (and femininity) in society in the most pleasantly innocuous way possible. While many people may not personally know a transperson, most people have met a tomboy or two in their life. No, they are not the same at all, but at the same time the non-traditional ways their gender is often outwardly presented has more in common than not—and sometimes broad strokes can help make the finest points.

So what about that half-abandoned Ergs! comparison? Well, much like those fellas, Prince has a similar way of combining what should come off as overly sentimental, romanticized themes in a manner which allows candor to belie the saccharine and reveal the occasional nugget of truth. What could be cheesy or hacky isn't, instead it's refreshing and entertaining. If the Ramones and the Descendents are the illegitimate ancestors that sowed the seeds for a unique and modern melodic punk classic like the Ergs!'s *Dorkrockcorkrod*, then Judy Blume and Beverly Cleary also somehow helped beget this new, uniquely modern coming-of-age classic. *Tomboy* is a shining example that just because you are working within a well-worn genre doesn't mean you have to be generic. I loved it more than I can say, probably more than you' d ever want to hear anyway. But I'm sure this book gets that an awful lot.

—Ray Suburbia

They Could Have Been Bigger Than EMI: A Discography of Now Defunct Independent Record Labels That Released Vinyl, Part 1: Europe
Edited by Joachim Gaertner
693 pages • 29.90 euros, $39.00
Pure Pop for Now People
www.ppfnp.com

If you have ever come to a point in your life when you wondered what the Plurex, No Future Records, Attack Punk, Chaos Productions, or even Pogar labels complete discographies looked like, there is now a book for you. We all know that Discogs has become the go-to site for such information, but we have all found holes or mis-information at times, leaving one with doubt about the accuracy of said information. This monster of a book, with a whopping 693 pages and over 4,300 labels, is serious business.

Gaertner, in some maniacal obsession, has laid out a wonderful resource here. Just like any normal punk collector freak, I immediately tried to find any holes in the project. What could be missing? In most cases there is almost always some oversight, and Gaertner admits there are sure to be some holes, but damn! They have done a pretty amazing job creating this catalogue. Another wonderful thing about this book is that no label was "too small" to be mentioned, which gains major points with this reader. A fun, flip-through book for fans of independent music. Awesome job, and the author claims there is more to come.

—Martin Sorrondeguy

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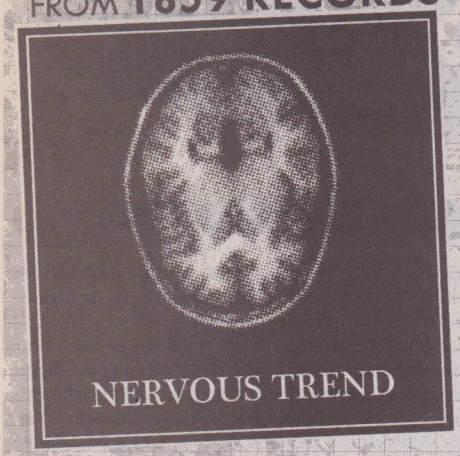

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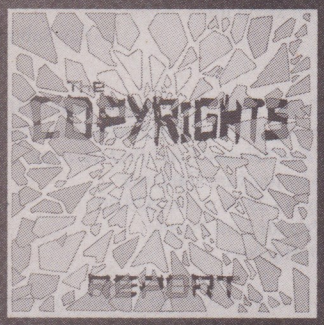

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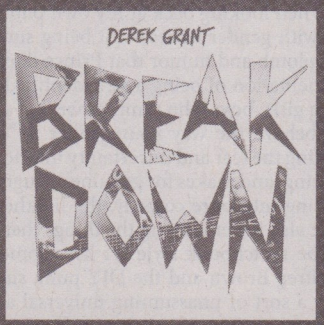

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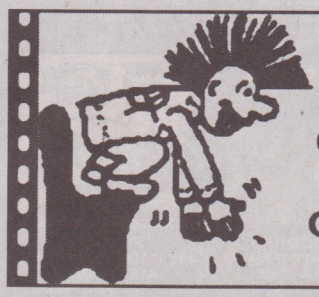


BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

THIS AIN'T NO PARTY, THIS AIN'T NO DISCO

I knew the movie **CBGB** was going to be bad. I've seen the trailer. But I really had no idea it would be this bad. Naturally, I couldn't resist seeing it. I just didn't want to have to pay for it. It never played in a theater around here so there wasn't the possibility of sneaking in. I had to wait patiently for someone to give me a copy. That finally happened. (P.S. Thanks to my benefactor.)

The opening scene sets up how wrong **CBGB** will be. It starts with the MC5's "Kick Out the Jams" playing over a black screen. Then the words "Most people think punk started"—cut to the outside of CBGB—"Here". Black screen again "Wrong." Shot of long-haired guy drawing at a desk. Another black screen "It started in this basement. Somewhere in Connecticut. This story is mostly true." Followed by a scene of John Holstrom and Legs McNeil discussing the beginning of *Punk* magazine. Talking Heads' "Life During Wartime" plays over the opening credits.

CBGB is the story of the club's owner Hilly Kristal. According to the film, Kristal opened CBGB after two failed attempts at running clubs. CBGB was initially called Hilly's On the Bowery before changing to to CBGB to accent the music Kristal wanted to showcase—country, bluegrass and blues. As legend has it, Television, along with manager Terry Ork, show up at CBGB to see about the band playing there. Since there never seemed to be any country, bluegrass, or blues bands playing there, Kristal begrudgingly gives Television a listen and starts to book punk and new wave bands. The film contradicts most things I've heard about Kristal, portraying him as a man with a vision who saw what these new bands would do. I hope that's true. No one usually gives bar managers credit for helping bands on their way. You usually only hear about the bands getting ripped off.

CBGB's version of Kristal has him letting everyone in the club for free and giving away drinks. He's a very generous guy. He helps out a junkie musician who lives on the street outside the club by giving him a job. He hires a guy who sells electronics in a deserted lot as his soundman. Of course, in business, being a generous guy does not make you successful. Kristal has trouble paying the rent, trouble getting alcohol to serve at the bar, trouble with the cops, trouble with bikers and trouble with the mob plus other misfortunes. He also goes on to manage the Dead Boys with disastrous results. Even if every bit of this is true, it does not manage to add up to an interesting story. Kristal comes across as a lazy pushover, which is hard to believe since CBGB kept going until 2006.

The downfall of **CBGB** is that all the details are wrong, making every aspect of the film ring false. By far the worst scene in the film is when the Ramones show up to try to get a show. Kristal asks what kind of songs the play. The Joey Ramone character says they only have four songs and he rattles off the songs beginning with "I Don't Wanna" (even listing "I Don't Wanna Be Learned / I Don't Wanna Be Tamed" as two different songs) to set up a weak joke about his lyrical content. Cut to the band on stage performing a song that isn't even a Ramones song, never mind that it isn't one of the four songs Joey just said was all they knew.

The inclusion of *Punk*'s Holstrom and McNeil seems unnecessary. It lends a cartoony style to the film and is an easy way to introduce the clientele of the club. Holstrom, McNeil, and Mary Harron get to ask the gathered rock stars (including Lou Reed and Debbie Harry) the questions they asked them in the magazine. The endless parade of anyone who ever played at or went to CBGB gets old quickly. Everyone gets a quick cameo so you know all the cool people were there. Yet, **CBGB** doesn't credit *Punk* as giving CBGB its reputation. Kristal's daughter Lisa finds the important, game changing press regarding Television performing at CBGB in the *Village Voice*.

I assumed Holstrom's and McNeil's abundant inclusion in the story meant they or one of them wrote the **CBGB** script. They didn't. When the writer's credit didn't appear in the end credits I searched online. To my horror and amusement I found that the team behind **CBGB** were also responsible for what was previously the film I cited as the worst I've ever seen—**Bottle Shock**. It all began to make sense why this was so off.

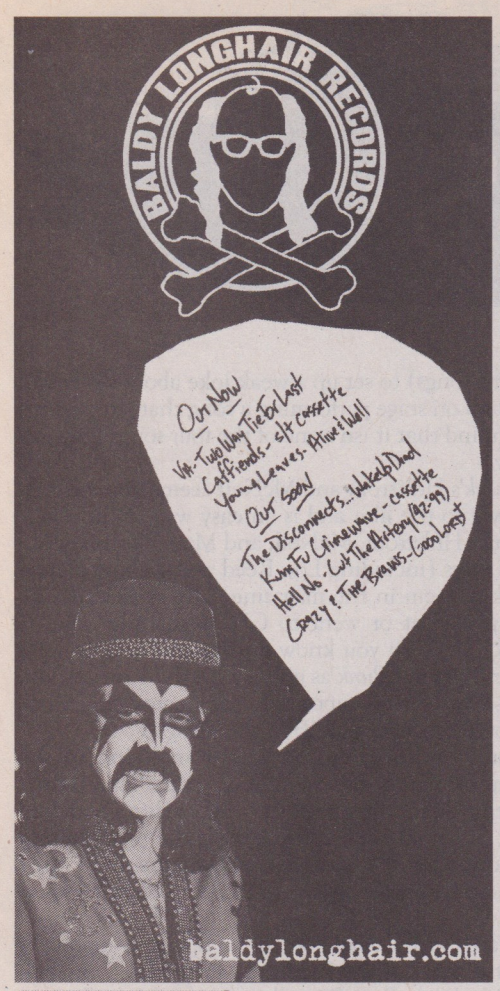
The Battered Bastards of Baseball goes for an opposite approach. This documentary is the story of the Portland Mavericks, a baseball team founded in 1973 by actor Bing Russell in a town Major League Baseball had given up on: Portland, OR. Portland's previous team had been moved to Spokane, WA. It is an entertaining film even for non-baseball fans.

As a kid, Russell hung around with the New York Yankees during spring training. He was obsessed with baseball and became friendly with Lefty Gomez, Lou Gehrig, and Joe DiMaggio. After an attempt at a baseball career, he went into acting. Most famously he played Deputy Clem on *Bonanza* for thirteen years. When the show was cancelled Russell settled into retirement, but it wasn't long before he got the idea to start an independent baseball team in Portland.

Russell's idea for the team was to make it fun. He really had nothing to lose. He held open tryouts so every player rejected by the professional teams (and some who never made it that far) showed up to try out for the team. Russell was against the corporatization of the game, rebelling against the idea that a minor league team was merely a training camp for the major leagues. He hired Jim Bouton, a former New York Yankees' pitcher who was blackballed after writing a tell-all book about behind the scenes in baseball. He also hired the first female general manager, Lanny Moss. The light-hearted attitude of the Mavericks combined with the fact that the team was actually good started to attract fans. As the crowds grew, the media attention did too. Then Major League Baseball started to get annoyed.

The Battered Bastards of Baseball is the story of some underdogs who give it to the man for at least a little while. It is inspiring and makes you despise how corporate the sport has become. I don't think I'll ever go to a game again. There is a lot of great footage of the team plus home movies of Russell and son Kurt demonstrating baseball techniques, as well as interviews with ex-Mavericks players, coaches and fans.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, c/o Maximum Rocknroll, *PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. No guest list necessary. www.carolynkeddy.com*



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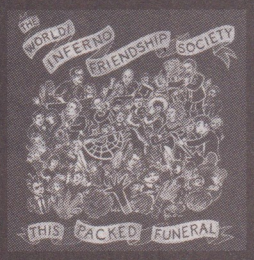

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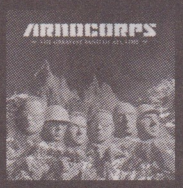

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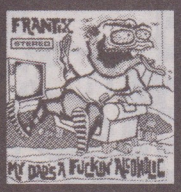

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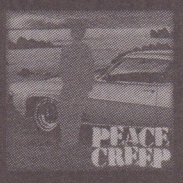

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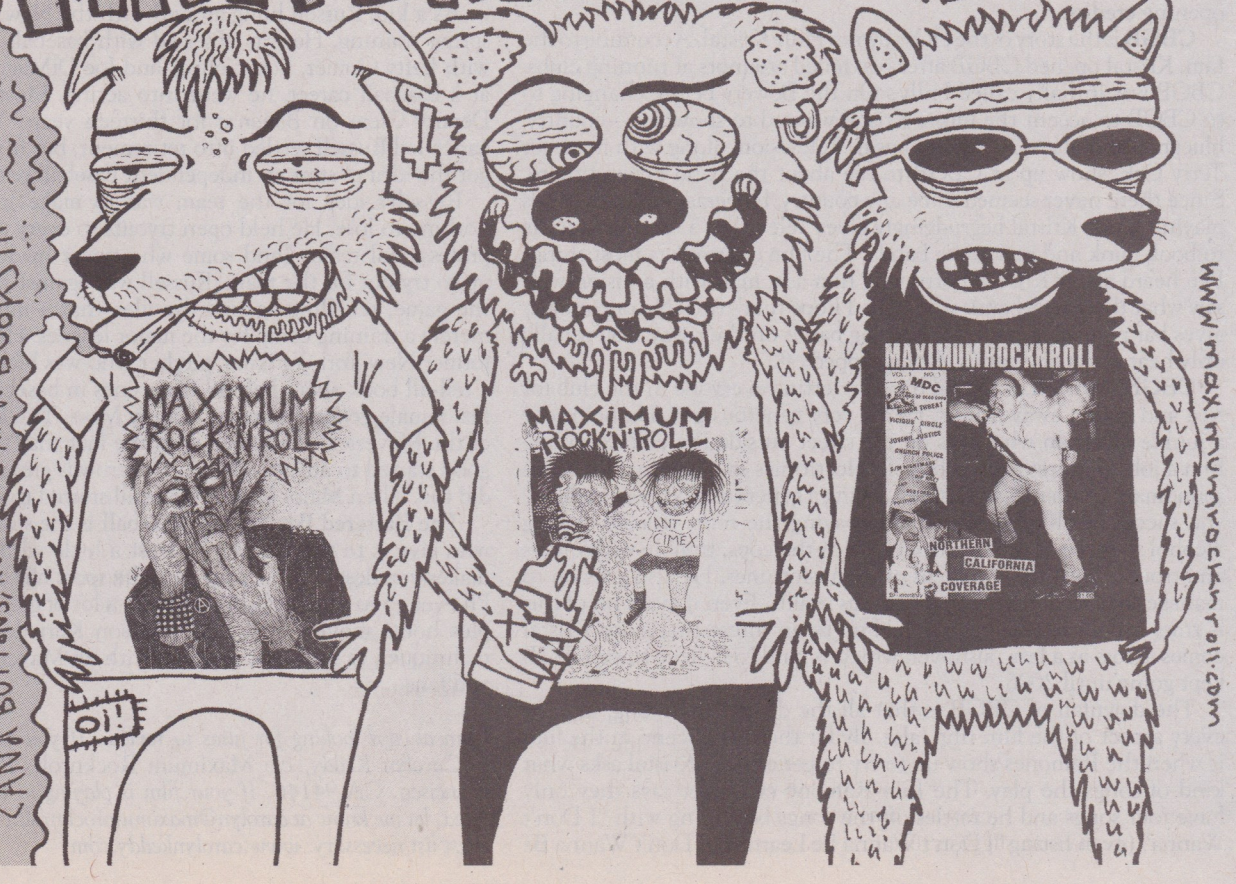

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RECORDS

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We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore, etc.—no major labels or labels distributed by major-affiliated distros. Releases without vocals or drums will not be considered. Please include postpaid price and contact information. Let us know where your band is from! *No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork.*

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ACCORDION CRIMES / GLASS HITS – split EP

ACCORDION CRIMES have a nice bassy SHELLAC or JESUS LIZARD-like angular, early to mid '90s indie rock vibe. Seems like there's currently a wave of bands doing playing this type of music again, and it's not a bad thing in this case, as they can play really tight and keep the songs moving with all their push-pull patterns and jagged tempos. GLASS HITS launch off into sorta similar territory, but it's more straight-ahead; sort of like parts of GUZZARD crossed with DRIVE LIKE JEHU. Impassioned vocals and hard-hitting bass and drums but at times I wish their songs were shorter. Otherwise, it's a good effort by two bands that are surprisingly from Denver and not Chicago or Minneapolis. Interesting packaging as this comes with a big ol' woodblock with a big ol' bee painted on it. (JD)
(Snappy Little Numbers)

ACTION SÉDITION / SPANNER – split EP

While the vinyl release is a two-song split EP, the enclosed download card gets you an additional track from each band. From Montreal, Québec, ACTION SÉDITION works a bouncy, mid tempo, street punk style, with rough vocals, clean guitar leads, and a sing-along chorus. This track is pretty average for the genre. Bristol, England's SPANNER provide a catchy, ska-influenced tune, with a lighter guitar tone and mellow horns laid over the breaks. I liked this side better—much of it is totally danceable—though the song is a little overlong. Both bands have righteous lyrics, with translations into English or French as needed. ACTION SÉDITION touches on the street action in response to Québec's increase in university tuition, while SPANNER promotes radical measures in the name of antifascism. You'll know what you're getting into from the cover art contrasting voting and rioting. (JM)
(Iron Colum / Jobsworth / Maloka / Rebel Time / Riot Ska)

ADVLTS – "Raw Nerves" EP

I'm pretty sure this band's name is pronounced "Adults" but they spell it that way for some reason. What do bands have against vowels these days? Spelling quirks aside, this is a good record. Driving melodic punk rock with the melody of NAKED RAYGUN, the bilious snark of BIG BLACK, and the discordant tunefulness of '90s emocore (I hate to use the term but there was a time when emo was still punk). Online stalking suggests that this band is comprised of slightly older gentlemen and the music certainly has the quality of being played by people who have been around the block and know what they're doing. Good stuff. (AM)
(Southpaw)

AGGROCULTURE U.S. – "Destiny Calls" EP

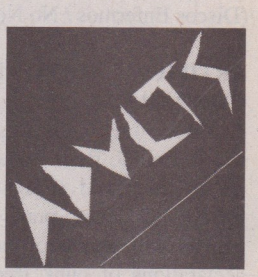
What a stupid fucking band name!? Conjures up images of skins laboring in the fields, manure on their Fred Perrys, getting dusted with Med Fly spray. And is there really another band sharing this shitty name that requires a "U.S." being added? It's competent but unmemorable Oi! that's too slick. The singer really doesn't cut it for me. He tries to hit some Ian Stuart melodies on "Destiny Calls Us Here" but can't hit those notes. "I'm Coming Los Angeles" goes into poppy DESCENDENTS territory. "Life is Easier" is the best song but it's all not very good. (RO)
(Crowd Control Media)

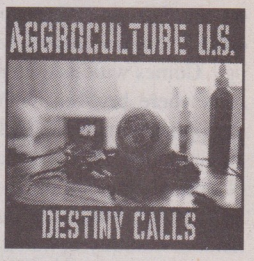
AJAX – "Bleach for Breakfast" EP

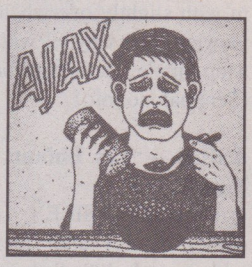
This is a vinyl pressing of AJAX's demo and if you haven't heard it yet you probably hate fun and are not down for the 'core, or you just live in a cave. Seriously raging D-beat/hardcore hybrid with really gritty, throaty vocals. It's over before you know it, but you're probably going to play it back to back. Catchy hooks and intros make "Never Learn" and "Security" my personal favorite tracks. Chances are, if you see me "drumming" on my thighs it's probably to "Security". There's no lyric sheet for the EP, which is a bummer, but besides that I can't say enough good things about this release. AJAX has set the bar for what current hardcore should be. If it ain't AJAX, it ain't shit. (KC)
(Even Worse)

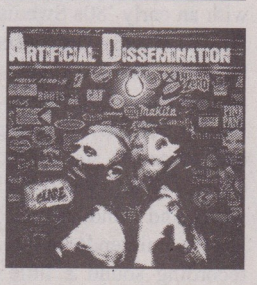
ARNDALES – "Dog Hobbies USA" LP

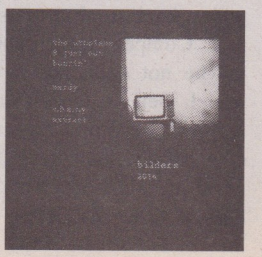
There's definitely the reverence for the FALL that you would expect from a band featuring a former COUNTRY TEASER, but this is sort of more muscular in a late '80s/early '90s Touch and Go Records "rock" manner somehow. Meaning it's certainly heavier than the FALL, but distinctly not as "rock" as the JESUS LIZARD, falling somewhere in the middle. Lyrics focus on the arcane and the mundane, you know, the debasement and degradations of modern life: "He is mostly interested in depilation / Junkie baseball cap worn by a tree surgeon… / Dreams of wall-mounts and free installation." Worth investigation! Surly and hilarious. (LG)
(In the Red)











ARREST – "La Poli Bastarda" EP

Stripped down, politically-tinted Oi! meets UK82 from Barcelona. Influenced by bands such as ESKORBUTO, DECIBELIOS, the 4-SKINS, CRIMINAL DAMAGE and G.B.H., ARREST deliver four tracks riddled with solid hooks, restless melodies and super suited pissed off vocals. The guitars range from gloomy, to frantic, to anthemic, while the lyrics work as a social commentary on the bastard police state and the vicious class cycle of socially imposed norms. "Te Suena" is an instant classic, while "Prácticas Mafiosas" is my favorite track, structurally reminiscent of NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS, blending BLITZ-like soaring, chilling hooks with clear, melodic vocals and a catchy as hell chorus. Comes in a nicely-printed cover with lyrical translations. Pick this up! (LA)
(Discos Enfermos / No Nostalgia)

ARTIFICIAL DISSEMINATION – "The Glare" EP

Three tracks by this rudimentary guitar and drum duo from Canada who belt out simple rhythms and straight ahead garage band (in the '77 sense) punk tunes. The A-Side is punchy with shouts of hatred for the cops and declarations of punk freedom. The title track on the flip goes more ponderous dirge, as it crashes on the downside of modern technology. Comes with its own newspaper style insert, somewhere between DEAD KENNEDYS news appropriation and SIGUESIGUESPUTNIK media manipulation. It's chock-full of explanations of and expansions on the lyrics, shades of an '80s/'90s pre-internet political conspiracy or fandom monthly newsletter, pouring everything in with slightly overwhelming ebullience. Fun, glowing green vinyl EP with a lot of thought poured a top simple, sturdy punk hammerings! (KS)
(Seminal, no info)

ASILE – "Les Enfants Batards D'un Pays Maudit" LP

Ontario's ASILE's (Asylum) second LP comes quickly after their killer 2012 debut, with an early '80s Swedish hardcore by way of DISCHARGE influenced guitar-drive, and howling shouted vocals over a consistent, steamrolling drumbeat that recalls BORN DEAD ICONS, an energetic full-kit workout and forceful, steady attack. The production choices on this second 12" are much more open room and sandpapered by distortion, which has the unintended consequence of making the recording sound a little less nimble, coupled with a haphazard unevenness in the drum volume. Competent, the band easily stretches, but maybe not quite pushes the formula of their sound. Deft switches to mid tempo sing-along anthems are pretty successful towards the end of each side, but the sound effects, solos and vocal squeals dropped in throughout prove more than a little distracting. The more seamless recording and speed of the first 12" really glued and propelled the songs more than the loose fitting framework found here, but the eleven tracks still land a solid footing in songwriting and delivery. The lyrics are entirely in French with no translation. (KS)
(Rust and Machine)

AUTONOMES – EP

No punk rock stone shall be left unturned when it comes to searching out late '70s punk relics. The archeologists over at Punkhouse Records dug up the recordings of a high school Welsh punk band, who briefly spewed amateur second wave punk from 1978-80. They cover all the classic topics: hating authority, chaos, vomit, neutron bombs… you get the idea. You could liken these songs to the track "I Hate You" (which appeared in *Star Trek 4*). Absolutely nothing on this double 7" is anything you haven't heard a million times before (and your high school punk band probably sounded a lot like these guys), but if you are among the punks who give clout to our punk history, this is indeed worth the search. However it may be a difficult search—there are only 100 copies available and the sleeve is disguised in camo. Good luck. (FS)
(Punkhouse Records)

THE BAD IDEAS / RED KATE – split EP

As soon as I plopped down the needle on the BAD IDEAS side of this split, I was sold. The singer's voice has a little bit of the same breathy desperation as Dyanne from HARUM SCARUM. For a second, I even wondered if it was her. The music is catchy, mid tempo, melodic punk that is definitely not polished, but also not falling apart. The lyrics are a little typical (fuck the man), but are sung with enough personality to make it really good. I'm into it. RED KATE is approaching punk from the REPLACEMENTS school of rock, which isn't a bad thing to me. The first song is a hooky open-chord burner that has a good melody. The second song is faster and more upbeat. They're a lot more polished and accomplished than the BAD IDEAS. They sound pretty awesome but I keep finding myself wanting to go back to the other side, so I will. (GH)
(Mills Record Company)

BACK OFF!! / NO MISTAKE – split EP

Budapest's BACK OFF!! play great hardcore punk that noticeably draws from youth crew, but is much faster and rawer than their influences. The first two of their six songs have an earnest 7 SECONDS and MINOR THREAT feel to them, while the other four are a little harder and more pissed, with breakdowns to match. The high-pitched vocals and nice blown-out recording bring it all together. NO MISTAKE play speedy youth crew-influenced hardcore that's neither powerful nor interesting. A song suggesting that people get their girlfriends to pluck their unibrows is pretty much a guarantee that I'm not gonna want to hear their side more than once. (DG)
(Guerilla / Honest for Truth / Positive Cacophony / Suburban White Trash)

BIG BOYS – "No Matter How Long the Line is at the Cafeteria, There's Always a Seat!" LP

So, this is kind of a no-brainer, right? As my friend Robert might say, "I'm not gonna sit around and wash their balls for them," but this is a great fuckin' record. If you're a lifer punk, this is not news to you. If you are a baby punk, welcome to the fold and listen to this shit right now. For any of you who don't know, BIG BOYS was an amazing Texas punk band from the '80's unafraid to incorporate elements of funk into its songs without making them shitty. Also, they were fat, queer, in your face, and unapologetic. This was the band's last proper LP and it finds them no less pissed and energetic. I mean, there is that song that's like "Daaaance, life's a party!!" which crosses a line that I can't quite describe, but I feel comfortable with it. And the record scratching jam? I'm not really going to get into it. I'm just going to skip forward to "Which Way To Go" and remember how exactly how unfuckwithable this band could be. This reissue has expanded artwork and a gatefold sleeve as well as some unpublished photos, a reproduction of the original insert, and a download code. Shit's cool. Go for it. (GH)
(Light in the Attic)

THE BIG FORGIVE – "BE SPECIFIC" 10"

As soon as I put this thing on I thought, "Oh wow, these guys must really like STREET EATERS!" Then again, I don't even know if they've ever heard them, but, considering that STREET EATERS are one of the best bands in the Bay Area right now, that's pretty awesome to me. Three-piece recently transplanted Oakland punk, with just guitars, vocals, and drums that rely heavily on vocal hooks and interesting song structures. "Take Us With You" wanders between ska-esque off-beats and earnest sweaty-basement Midwest pop punk. Sometimes straightforward riff rocking, sometimes frantic punk paced thrashing. Singing songs about "conformists and bureaucrats," while also adapting lyrics from the works of a 19th century English Jesuit poet-priest. A good record. Hope to catch them live, where these songs would probably sound massive. (FU)
(Charmstrong)

BILDERS – "Utopians" EP

BILDERS is the musical moniker of New Zealander Bill Direen and whomever he manages to pull together (not limited to, but often including, some architects of the Dunedin sound). The songs tend towards semi-improvised krautrock/post-punk, with prose-like lyrics sung-spoken over the top.

Comparisons to the FALL are inevitable and only to be expected, but the main similarity is how each band coheres around an intelligent wit for a leader. (AM)
(SmartGuy)

BLACK WINE – "Yell Boss" LP

Picture yourself in an unfinished basement, any concrete dungeon, full of skinny jean punksters and the smell of cloves surrounding you, awaiting the next eastern US pop fuzzy punk band to riff its way in to your heart for the next eighteen minutes before you move on, like a collective one-night-stand. I imagine BLACK WINE thrives in this scene. They take the old, tried and true fuzzy punk rules and have crafted a truly memorable sound out of a genre plagued by doomed-to-be-forgotten riffs. It's 2014, anyone can riff; who can make you smile? I had a stupid grin during most of my first listen to this record because I have been so numbed by generic pop punk that I was genuinely happy to hear something as fun as this. Very MARKED MEN / RADIOACTIVITY, but with more classic alternative noodly riffage and dual vox. Smoke 'em if you got 'em but don't let no cigarillo keep you outside when BLACK WINE cues up in a basement near you, or you will be asking your friends what you missed. Highlight Tracks: "Magnet Time," "Piccoline." (DV)
(Don Giovanni)

BLESSED STATE – "Head Space" 12"

This is a short record blending pop punk and melodic hardcore. Some of it sounds pretty much like DAG NASTY or maybe even SWIZ, fast and heavy but with melody. A couple of the tracks are musically pretty straight pop punk (though it must be said that there are some pretty cool guitar parts in there) with vocals that still sound like the previously mentioned bands. Wrap it all up in well-crafted songs and a slick recording. (PA)
(Safety Meeting)

B-LINES – "Opening Band" 12"

The VICIOUS and the REGULATIONS are truly the AMERICAN NIGHTMAREs of mid-2000's DIY punk, in that everyone went from sporting their T-shirts to pretending they never liked them seemingly overnight—but if I didn't know any better, I'd guess that the B-LINES didn't forget. Their music is awkward, angsty, and jangly (despite a one sheet that speaks of "evolution" and "maturity"), simultaneously self-conscious yet honest, and with a rough-and-tumble sound that is mostly mid-paced poppy punk but hits a proto-hardcore speed from time to time. The riffs are mostly unique and catchy in a stripped down CLOROX GIRLS or MARKED MEN sort of way—though the B-LINES sound contemporary, it's likely they're mining the same source material as these two—and the vocals are dramatic and crack from time to time, but effectively convey exasperation. There is a probably a solid EP worth of songs spread out over this record but also a lot of filler that's not as worth wading through. The lyrics are self-referential in a way that any adult bar-punk who lives a cynical but comfortable life in Portland or Austin or wherever the fuck can relate to, and references to the god damn guest list can be found in more than one song. (DG)
(Hockey Dad / Nominal)

BLOOD ROBOTS – LP

A great document of another old UK anarcho-punk band. Right off the bat, BLOOD ROBOTS (such a cool name!) don't have the specific notable sonic qualities of contemporaries like INSTIGATORS or SUBHUMANS, but each song is distinct and there's not a dud among them, all solidly-written punk songs with great lyrics. The vocals take the forefront and both vocalists have the same sort of doomy charisma as the MOB. I find myself enjoying the demo tracks the most. Their only prior vinyl appearances were a split flexi with REALITY CONTROL and a couple of comp tracks, all of which are on here along with selected tracks from their 1983 tape *You Fuel The Fire* and some live and practice room material. A very well put together collection, and a must for those interested in the UK anarcho-punk movement from the '80s. (MA)
(Thought Crime)

BRICK MOWER – "Teenage Graceland" LP

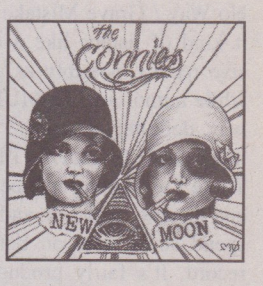
This whole record sounds like it's sitting in limbo. It's not bad but it sounds like it is constantly missing something. Part of that comes from the recording sounding a bit dull, which is a hard thing to overcome in itself. It's lots of mid to up-tempo pop punk from the JAWBREAKER school, but the songs tend to lack hooks. You get to certain parts and you think, "This is where it happens!" And then nothing happens. Add some attempted harmonizing gone wrong and it doesn't look great. There are a couple of gems—"Sad Houses" sounds a lot like an ARCHERS OF LOAF track. It's missing that cool second guitar, but it actually has the band sounding comfortable, those gruff/sung vocals finally fitting with the slower and heavier music. They've been a band for a while but maybe they still need to find the correct sound. (PA)
(Don Giovanni)

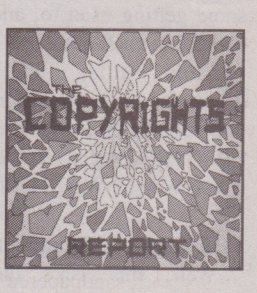
BRING THE DRONES – "Bordello Hospital" EP

Damn. Members of GAMLA PENGAR, DOOM and ANTI-CIMEX. It's a little less raging D-beat than you would expect, even though that element is definitely there. It's got this MOTÖRHEAD rock'n'roll type vibe, and then there are these weird, melodic change ups / technical riffs that break up the more straightforward elements. It all kinda sounds like the music you would hear in the background of *Jackass* when they would ride a shopping cart off a roof or something. (KC)
(Headnoise / Phobia)

BROTTSKOD II – LP

Whoa, this is a sequel? Where have I heard this before? First reactions are: This is a most excellent revisit to the distortions of SKITSYSTEM or HUMAN WASTE and all those Swedish kings of käng. The tempo is slightly slower with more emphasis on menacing grindcore chord progression and the vocals are more sizzling. Tempos change often enough to evoke a thoughtful album arrangement as on GENOCIDE SS's *Hail the New Storm*. I'm always into some stylish spaced out guitar solos, like on the SKITSYSTEM *Gra Värld Svarta Tankar* LP, to disengage from the D-beat barrage for a few measures. Just slightly before the end of the A-Side, I blasted the volume on this fucker and I was really moved. The first song on the B-Side, "Löneslav," is the burning bastard horse of war, set loose to clobber the nation. At times the layered





vocals by a number of members sound almost jovial, with slick complementary guitar solos. There is no doubt that BROTTSKOD II know they're reinforcing the original masters with mad millennium attitude. BROTTSKOD II is on the straight-up crushing D-beat defensive and pushing it back hard. Get crushed, mangleheads. Their record is dedicated to their friend, band member and brother, Nils Albin Landin. (JR)
(Headnoise)

BULDOGI – "Rektospektiva 1979-1982" CD

A retrospective release of the Ex-Yugo band BULDOGI. The songs have a mix of early punk with a lot of pub rock and raga rock thrown in there. It's labeled as a retrospective, with dates next to all of the song titles, but I'm pretty sure that these are all re-recorded versions of their older songs. The liner is filled with current pictures of the band as well, which is rather off putting for a '79-'82 collection, so check out their interview in this issue instead. There's not a lot of information in English on this band, but I would be interested in hearing the original versions of these songs. If these actually are the originals, then BULDOGI pioneered that over-produced youth radio rock sound. (KC)
(Kappa)

CARDIAC ARREST – "In the Mouth of Madness" LP

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first thing this band has done since their 2006 EP on No Way / Grave Mistake and a 2010 tour, and it kind of listens like a disconnected, incohesive record, possibly as a result. The artwork, while humorous in a MURPHY'S LAW sort of way, definitely screams "formerly good band's much later, forgettable LP," as does the music. There's a dividing line between straightforward and generic hardcore, and CARDIAC ARREST spend some time on both sides of it on this record. It's fairly produced for an early '80s style hardcore record, the gruff vocals take some getting used to, and the songs generally blend into each other, but there are some hooks, cathartic riffs, and not-as-monotonous drumming to be found on the B-Side. Overall, you're better off checking out their earlier stuff, or CIVIC PROGRESS, and BROKEN PRAYER. (DG)
(Even Worse / Way Back When)

THE CATS – "Relax On Everyone" LP

Well, this isn't the CATS from the Netherlands, so you can relax. Or, you can get pissed, I don't care. At first, I was a little bummed when I put the needle on this record. A fairly lackluster '90s radio friendly grunge/alternative bit followed a pretty funny, stolen intro from some shitty Warped-style fest. Fortunately, the rest is catchy as hell. The recording quality is just a bit low, almost perfectly so, like that CARRIE NATIONS demo (which was fucking brilliant). I know these are crazy as dogshit comparisons, but I hear elements of GUIDED BY VOICES, the quirkiness of the BANANAS, and a vocal delivery not unlike SWEARIN'. This is really good. I would like to hear some more, please. (DZ)
(Manondor, no info)

CHEAP RIOT – "Part-Time Vacancy/Man of that Kind"

The A-Side is awesome minimalist punk/power pop that is reminiscent of O LEVEL and TV PERSONALITIES. It's got a sound that I would describe as barely competent, and that is not in any way meant to be an insult. It's super catchy and enjoyable, but it almost feels like the wheels are about to come off. The B-Side continues in exactly the same style and is just as much of a hit as the A-Side. This is totally badass. Oh, and they're from Paris. (KK)
(Croque Macadam)

CHEST PAIN – "Weltschmerz" LP

CHEST PAIN spews out somewhat unique powerviolence. Sure, sure they remind me a lot of CAPITALIST CASUALTIES and INFEST, but they throw a few things in to mix up their sound, including a bunch of feedback and some odd electronic sounds. Nobody is listed as playing any type of keyboards or anything like that so I have to wonder if they aren't making the unique noise sounds in a MITB way with guitar effects. CHEST PAIN call Austin, TX home and their slight twist on powerviolence is a refreshing listen. (MH)
(To Live A Lie)

WILD BILLY CHILDISH & CTMF – "Punk Rock Enough For Me/Zero Emission"

Side A is a rather generic CHILDISH song where he simply speaks to music a list of things that are punk rock enough for him. LEADBELLY, HENDRIX in Beatle boots, BILLIE HOLIDAY, Dostoyevsky, and a cup of tea? You bet. Although I can just as easily wax nostalgic about the good old days of punk, this song makes me want to say, "Get over it, old man." Yeesh. Luckily, Side B's "Zero Emission," featuring great vocals by JuJu, more than makes up for it. A classic garage-y punk song with lots of attitude. The chorus "You're a stupid bore, so dumb and handsome" is catchy and cool. As a bonus there is a cute photograph of punk Billy in 1977 on the cover. (CK)
(Damaged Goods)

CIGARETTE CROSSFIRE – CD

Spent more than 30 seconds trying to figure out exactly what "cigarette crossfire" could possibly mean, which was a waste of 30 seconds, because honestly, no one really cares. Next considered the retro-futuristic steam-punk artwork on the cover of this CD, the allure of which altogether escapes me—and after listening to CIGARETTE CROSSFIRE, so does this particular vein of alt-pop punk. A glossy, generic, almost commercial sounding version of LEATHERFACE and DILLINGER FOUR with gruff tough-guy vocals. (CR)
(Waterslide)

COACHWHIPS —"Get Yer Body Next Ta Mine" LP

Rerelease of the COACHWHIPS sophomore 2002 album, still a fine piece of garage punk, apparently remixed and remastered. Still fuzzed out all to hell, as it should be, so no worries. I'd have to say this was their best album, full of soul and swagger. *Get Yer Body* at times teeters into proto-psych obscurity—Mary Ann McNamara's keyboard stylings are a bit sci-fi. It's all atop a gloriously sloppy garage fuzz, rough and fuzzy on all exposed edges (not that it blurs the jolt-shudder and shake of drums and guitar). John's vocals are hyper-distorted, which adds to the charm of their off-kilter, off-pitched sound. For those not familiar with COACHWHIPS, perhaps this being the first wind, this was John Dwyer's band before he started THEE OH SEES. Lovers of THEE OH SEES, JAY REATARD, TY SEAGULL, and locals USELESS EATERS: you probably already own this album and if not, now's the time. Gnarly. (CR)
(Castle Face)

COLD CIRCUITS – "Out of Hat Yai" LP

This Bay Area band is no longer with us but at least we have this 12" to remember them by. Agitated, choppy, splintered punk stutters along from one idea to the next—visiting a verse or chorus more than a couple of times an unnecessary indulgence. Terse guitar work and spat vocals push their way through a dense reverb fog to grab you by the throat. COLD CIRCUITS are not going to pat your back and tell you everything will be okay. Whatever world this record inhabits, it's not a happy one. It's Monday and I left work feeling dejected; I have flipped this (short) album a few times now and rather than feeling buoyed, I still feel bleak. The members of this band are still kicking around the area in different bands, so don't be too despondent at their end. (AM)
(Erste Theke Tonträger)

COMPULSION TO KILL / GRINCHFINGER – split EP

GRINCHFINGER are a drum and strings grindcore/death metal duo that does a nice job of keeping it simple and raw. Their first track might be one of the best descriptions of grind I've ever heard. The lyrics on "In Tune with Grind Pt. II" paint a picture which sounds like being in suburbia and not wanting to take part in the whole thing and, as they say, just being "disgruntled and feeling mean / Neighborhood Curmudgeon." COMPULSION TO KILL might be one of my favorite Malaysian bands and they also grind, but in more of an AGATHOCLES meets powerviolence way. Their second

track "Down in Flames" opens with a sample of some glammy metal band from the '80s, kicks into a rock/metal sounding riff, then rips into a powerviolence leaning grind. Nice. (MH)
(Acid Redux)

CONNIES – "New Moon" EP

High-powered rockers from the Bay Area give us three of their best songs on this new 7". They are like the EXPLODING HEARTS if the EXPLODING HEARTS all a sudden discovered DEAD BOYS were their favorite band. Obviously they are nowhere near as infectious as those two bands ('cause almost nobody is), but these songs are super driving and fun. You've wasted too much of your life listening to the same RAMONES records over and over again—time to give the CONNIES a try! (FS)
(Relentless Greed Records, no info)

THE COPYRIGHTS – "Report" CD

Apparently these chaps have been doing their thing for a decade or so now, and this is their sixth full-length (!?). I have a couple of their records, but I guess I don't get out as much as I used to. Suffice to say, this firecracker not only carries the torch of pop punk à la SCREECHING WEASEL, but really builds/adds to the genre. "Heart Of Glue" is under two minutes, but in terms of perfect pop genius brings to mind the poise and startling clarity of WIRE's "Outdoor Miner." *Anthem For A New Tomorrow* for today's generation, and then some. (RK)
(Red Scare)

COUNCIL OF RATS – "Ill Weathers" 12"

Let the industrial grind revolution begin. COUNCIL OF RATS is in session and the floor is emotionally charged. The variety of dynamics on this record is intriguing, ranging from blubbering grind fills to neo-hardcore breakdowns. The vocals are mostly screamy, but the lyrics are filled with dark cosmic metaphors and analogies about animals. The tempo is constantly chasing itself, with natural punk inflections (not too polished—good!), and pulverizing drums. There are inspired doses of metal and hardcore, and being natives of Milan, Italy, I'm very impressed with the poetic nature of the lyrics, including sentiments such as "Old crow grieves on." As a unit, COUNCIL OF RATS work best together at their riveting fast hardcore punk speed. The more modern metal riff interludes work well, but for the most part the speed is where COUNCIL OF RATS excels. The final track, "Harbors and Homes" is absolutely killer and reinforces their passion and talent for composing complex hardcore songs, without demanding too much attention. Not an easy rope to climb or ship to board. Yes, that was a rat analogy. (JR)
(Adagio 830)

CRIME – "Murder By Guitar" LP

"All you hippies can fade away!" And with that, there's punk. You can thank CRIME for that swipe. You can also thank them for the menacing, campy, stark-as-hell vibe they brought to rock'n'roll. That off-the-charts cool can *finally* be definitively heard on *Murder By Guitar*, a record many punks have waited their entire lives for and one that the band waited around 35 years to unleash. Not surprisingly, it's nothing short of *thee* classic American punk album that never was ('til now!). Collecting all three of the band's original 45s (sounding better than ever!) and a smattering of exclusive, totally unreleased studio recordings (many tunes previously heard only on shoddy live bootlegs and demo collections), *Murder By Guitar* truly is the dream CRIME record, the one we've been waiting for, the one we always hoped existed. "Frustration," "Hot Wire My Heart," "Piss On Your Dog" and hell, even "Maserati" (always a personal fave!) are all genius, and that's just a sampling of the non-stop killers collected here. The druggy deviance and fuck-everyone confidence of CRIME comes through each tune with zero fucking subtlety and full-steam power. The songs shock and stab you, the guitars drive straight through your heart and at some point, you realize that it rarely gets anywhere near as good as this. *Murder By Guitar* is an intimidating, completely classic rock'n'roll record. Perfect and essential! (MC)
(Superior Viaduct)

CRUELSTER / PUTRID CAUSE – split EP

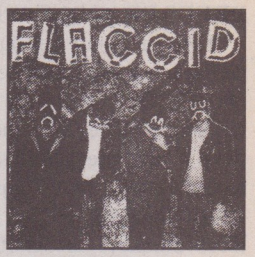
CRUELSTER keeps the Cleveland hardcore flame ablaze with their fourth release in two years. Proficiently executed hardcore with some weird noodle parts and big, powerful SSD style vocals. You'll also find a cover of "Freak of Nature"—does the world really need a hardcore version of a later RAMONES song? Interesting choice. This reminds me a bit of the current Toronto hardcore thing and people digging on S.H.I.T. and KREMLIN should give it a try. This split's other half is PUTRID CAUSE, a three-piece from Columbus that transmits a total '80s Midwest vibe, splitting the difference between DIE KREUZEN (including their proto-grunge elements) and ZERO BOYS. If you are curious about what is going on in the realm of weird Ohio hardcore punk, this EP—with seven songs and two bands crammed onto one 7"—is an overall bang for your buck. (LT)
(Turbine Piss)

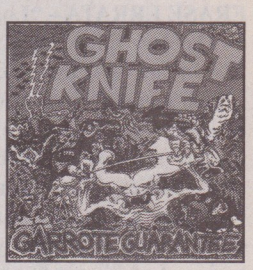
DEPARTURE KIDS – "On the Go" LP

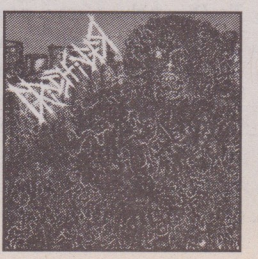
Imagine if SWEET BABY had been French and opted to be less of a pop punk band and more of a pop band. Or imagine if the BEATLES sometimes played really snappy numbers and threw in some distortion. In a perfect world, pop bands would be really good and this record wouldn't get reviewed in a punk zine. But most pop music sucks ass, so when a good pop record does come along, punk zines are the only ones who pay attention. This is really excellent. (KK)
(Howlin' Banana / Requiem Pour Un Twister)

THE DESTRUCTORS – "Dolor Goggler" CD

Somehow this long-running UK pub rock band is still at it. If you've picked up an issue of this magazine, well, *ever* you've probably glossed over a DESTRUCTORS review, since they somehow have the motivation and expendable income to continue churning out these pieces of plastic on a far-too frequent basis. This record brings nothing new to the table—much like all of their others. Topics include birds, beer, England, Christmas, getting pissed, throwing up from getting pissed, and getting pissed all over again the next day. The sheer number of DESTRUCTORS CDs in landfills around the world is staggering. Lads, you're way over your allotted carbon footprint. This magazine is thanked in the liner notes (alongside GENESIS BREYER P-ORRIDGE?!), but I assure you, world, we were not complicit in the production of this record. Please make it stop. (GA)
(self released)







DRUGS DRAGONS – "II & I/II" LP

This one can't be digested in one session, perhaps not even in one bottle. Milwaukee's DRUGS DRAGONS are a psychedelic garage freakout rocketed into the new millennium by force. There are glorious songs buried in this record, hooks that conjure up memories of REIGNING SOUND or even the 'MATS, but these monkeys drench those hooks in noise and booze and enough don't-give-a-fuck juice to fuel the next Fuck You caravan to Mars. Vocals are somewhere between SCRATCH ACID and SPITS on PCP (or maybe the sound of the SPITS while *you* are on PCP) and there are so many things going on besides the songs themselves that it's easy to stop listening to the songs altogether—because the other shit is just as good as the songs. I might be just the right amount of drunk right now, but DRUGS DRAGONS is exactly what I need. (WN)
(Dusty Medical Records)

ERASE ERRATA – "Lost Weekend" LP

The last time I saw ERASE ERRATA, a few years ago, they were opening for NOH MERCY and their new songs sounded like bar rock. Every time I got excited about a song I quickly realized it had been written five-plus years earlier. This record is awful. I'm not expecting a band to sound exactly the same over a span of fifteen years—that would be boring. And it's not like they churned out three of the same album before, but the rest of their records have this anxious tension, a feeling of holding your breath and breathing hard, a constant panic attack where you're holding your shit together because you are in public. It's no longer frenetic, and that was key. *Nightlife* was more melodic and soaring than the more jagged past but it still felt as if there was an underlying panic. All they've retained here is a hint of angularity. It's stilted but not silently freaking out. This sounds like it just mellowed out and put on some sweatpants, or like they started to listen to the GRATEFUL DEAD and thought it was a good idea to move in that direction. It's all of these chill long jam-outs, at a party filled with dudes in paisley being like, "It's cool man, he's cool". What a bummer, so awful. (MM)
(Under the Sun, no info)

THE ERGS! – "Dorkrockcorkrod" LP

Right now I'm going to explain to you the ERGS! musical style for the benefit of the new guys... In the early/mid '00s this album, along with the COPYRIGHTS *We Didn't Come Here To Die,* helped save pop punk from the stale smell of moldering leather jackets and Chuck Taylors and beat-to-death Lookout! rehash. These guys (like their melodic basement punk brethren the MODERN MACHINES, and BENT OUTTA SHAPE) were relentless touring machines, seemingly coming through town every few months with a new record, CD, or mp3 encoded floppy disk—reminding everyone that punk can still be both sentimental and raging. But to call the ERGS! 2004 LP debut simply a pop punk record is to do it an *incredible* injustice. Are the DESCENDENTS just a pop punk band? First off, this is punk played by actual musicians, whose influences reach far beyond the record store punk bin, a band that named their tour van "Gelder" and had a sign at their practice space that read "Keep it esoteric." Like the MARKED MEN, this band slowly, somehow, became a band that *everyone* loved—tough guy hardcore dudes, bubblegum and Jones Soda pop punkers, D-beat crusters, and jaded I-was-punk-before-you-was-punks. Besides the *huge* sounding remastering job, this tenth anniversary reissue has no bells or whistles—just the same sixteen perfect songs and Lew Houston's wonderfully Lester Bangs-tinged liner notes. The only difference is the packaging. The record now comes in a proper slide-in printed jacket and a nicely printed inner sleeve (Don Giovanni definitely has a bit more money now than in '04) with slightly modified art. It seems that the band ended up agreeing with Rev. Norb's assertion that the pretzel on the original cover was not a "rod" but in fact a "stick" and have since replaced it with what appears to be the Inanimate Carbon Rod from *The Simpsons*. Unfortunately the ERGS! are no longer a band, with Joe now in NIGHT BIRDS, Jeff in BLACK WINE, and Mikey drumming in every band ever. This really is a crucial record for anyone remotely interested in catchy, hook laden, melodic punk, one of those records that in some punk circles is already considered a classic. If you didn't get this the first time, get it now. *Right now!* (FU)
(Don Giovanni)

THE ESCAPIST – "Soon" EP

This Finnish three-piece takes a pinch of some of the better elements of '90s emo and throws in a bit of peace punk angst. I know, that sounds terrible, and to be honest, I could do without the last song, but the rest is pretty tight! Great anarcho lyrics, the emo is sparse, choppy and unpretentious, and the artwork is super nice. I could see me getting into these guys at some point in my life. I'll be more than just curious to check out a future full-length. (DZ)
(self-released)

EXECUTIVE SLACKS – 12"

Dark Entries's persistence and knowledge when it comes to unearthing forgotten dark wave/minimal synth/industrial releases is overwhelming. It's like every single one of these releases is an important cultural relic. EXECUTIVE SLACKS sounds like it was born out of an existential crisis in '80s Philly, then run through fucked up and primitive modular synths with an proto-EDM beat made with various trash like a filing cabinet and a drum machine. Vocals can be aggressive then recessive and haunting, harkening back to THROBBING GRISTLE but with a club edge. Even now, when any leather pants asshole can make a record like this with Ableton and an Electribe, this album, originally released in 1983, is still ahead of its time in regards to style and edginess. (AP)
(Dark Entries)

FEAR OF EXTINCTION / MOTH – split EP

What the hell are MOTH (March of the Hordes)? I'm having trouble coming up with a single word to describe this, but I will try. Metalish crusty hardcore, but with some catchy guitar riffs and old school HELLHAMMER or early black metal type vocals. The riffs are a buzzsaw and I don't know how to describe it, but I know I really like this track. FEAR OF EXTINCTION do straightforward D-beat crust. Eh, nothing to hear here, move on. (MH)
(Dis-Scrot, no info / Fear of Extinction / Phobia / Rawmantic Diasters / Riotstarter, no info / Terror Night Recordings / Veva / Warholy Art)

FEAST / VÄTERCHEN FRUST – split EP

FEAST from Berlin play amped, thumping, quick hardcore with desperate dual vocals that sing in and out of tandem, over charging, thin yet riff-blasted punk. There's a slight '90s feel, maybe because the music seems to serve as a conduit for and be directed by the vocals and lyrics. Sung in English, the three tracks savage the rich, frustration and indifference between curt build-ups and intros in a plain, but effective recording. A complementary pairing on the flip, VÄTERCHEN FRUST ("Father Frustration" a word play on "Väterchen Frost," Father "Frost" Christmas) from Frankfurt, land three tracks featuring gruff Japanese-style monster vocals spitting German lyrics over 1-2 boot stomping hardcore, a tough and killer pairing of pogo-ready upbeat, murky raw attack and divergences into throttling blast beats. Comes with band stickers, limited to 200 copies. (KS)
(Flesh Bug)

FISTULA – "Vermin Prolificus" LP

I can only assume that FISTULA is southern, because their mix of swampy sludge and down-tuned hardcore draws a direct line between early '90s North Carolina and New Orleans. Imagine a continuation of the path BUZZOV•EN was on after their ill-fated 1998 *Revelation: Sick Again* recording. Which is to say, FISTULA doesn't approach the level of *Sore* or *Take As Needed For Pain*, but this shit is mean, misanthropic and ugly. And really, really heavy. (WN)
(To Live A Lie Records)

FLACCID – "Scumbag" EP

Snotty and raw, FLACCID fit in well with the current roster of top-notch USHC bands. The rhythm section holds everything together so well here that the guitar can actually play some really

memorable leads and riffs, without sacrificing the power in each of the eight tracks on the EP. This is solid from start to finish, each subsequent listen makes me question which song is my favorite because they all make me want to pogo and slam simultaneously. The vocals are perfectly in the mix, spewing hateful and angry lyrics that I would love to sing along to. FLACCID: Please come to California soon, or at least play Philly around late December when I'll be back on my ancestral coast. Can't recommend this enough. Boston, you're killing it right now. (SZ)
(Nothing is Real)

FLESH WOUNDS – LP

FLESH WOUNDS play trashy, noisy music that resembles a hardcore band trying to be a bit more melodic. There is some feedback and the singer screams a lot. There may also be a touch of garage influence that seems to come from an admiration of JAY REATARD. When the band slows it down they start sounding too metal-y and lose me completely, but fortunately that doesn't last too long. The song I like the most is a cover of "I'm Gonna Dig Myself a Hole." It has a nice attitude and is done really well. (CK)
(Snot Releases)

FÖRGIFTAD – "Megalomaniacs Inc." EP

This band has seriously ugly artwork and an uglier sound, and I mean that in the best way possible. Dark waves of drunken Swedish crust-blasting make way for fastcore riffs and absolute machine-like drumming. "Närfyller Vikvoten?" is a killer track that takes the least mercy on my ears, which is where I think FÖRGIFTAD excel: playing blisteringly fast. I'm also very down with the Morgan Freeman "You guys are still idiots" sample. I get the sense FORGIFTAD want to be taken as idiots. Let me explain: Nihilistic noise-raiding punks. Side B rages on with a solid-cold cover of BODYCOUNT's "Cop Killer." A-fucking-plus. (JR)
(Phobia)

FRAU – "Punk is My Boyfriend" EP

FRAU write songs like the inside of your brain, fragmented, wild spurts of genius and disgust, an embodiment of the freedom that punk could be but rarely ever is. Frantic and charged, like the first NURSE flexi meets "Girl on the Run" but with a TEENAGE JESUS AND THE JERKS "fuck you" swagger. In short, yes, this band is the first, last and best, the only punk band. They're totally falling apart, but so fucking together at the same time, you could dance to this or collapse to it. It's got this earth shattering quality, the feeling of a million ideas, but also a sneering nihilism… London really does have the coolest bands right now. I think every member of FRAU is in at least three other bands I love, and yet they still make this essential. (LG)
(Static Shock)

THE FUNS – "Concrete" EP

The dead neon roses on the cover, languishing on the sidewalk, reiterate that despite whatever pomp and preening occurred at the art school where this cover was concocted… this band still experiences an ocean deep sense of alienation (ya know, feeling dead inside) in public. I braced for goth affectations and received the transmission filtered through the dream pop of the VIVIAN GIRLS. It yielded unremarkable results… but the good news is that it's definitely not remarkably or categorically bad. If you follow any number of my social media outlets, you know that I'm as game for this brand of gothic dream pop as I am for Oi! (I have boots tattooed under my eyes where tears should be) (i.e. check out the sick pic on my Instagram of me with the FRANKIE ROSE portrait henna tat at the LAKES gig). I'm reeling in the feeling that this def isn't bad… it just doesn't cross the threshold into "choice vinyl" territory because it ultimately sounds like a composite sketch of its influences. (P$)
(Maximum Pelt)

THE GAGGERS – "Sharp Lies/Hostage"

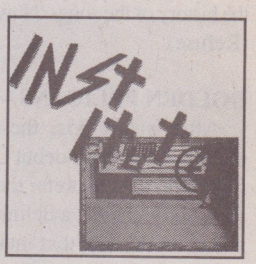
These guys have a bunch of records out that I have to admit I've paid no attention to. Nothin' against them, just hasn't happened. Until now. From the artwork and band members' names (Rudy Retch….heh, heh) they look like some of the '77 punk revivalists from the '90s like the STITCHES, LOWDOWNS, etc… The verse parts of "Sharp Lies" even remind me of "Vibrator Buzz" by the STITCHES. The singer's voice is nice and reeks of glue and tar heroin. The choruses are super catchy and danceable. "Hostage" is the much better song, all about keeping the one you love real close. Like tied up, gagged with duct tape, in your closet close. Cool. (RO)
(Damaged Goods)

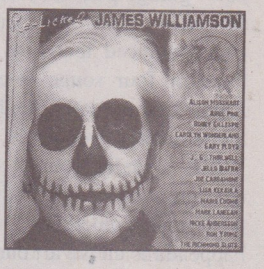
GHOST KNIFE – "Garrote Guarantee" EP

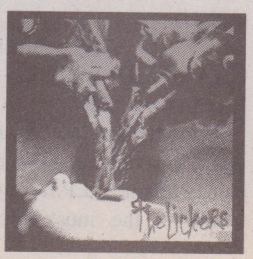
Are you the kind of person who cares about RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS or Ben Snakepit? Both?! Holy shit, you're gonna love this EP. Mike from RIVERBOAT fronts this three-piece, while "The Snake" is of course on bass duty. The sound on these four songs is surprisingly eclectic, so diverse that you could almost almost fool someone into believing this was a four-band comp 7". The tracks take influence from pop punk, garage and indie, all separately contained within their own songs (like a lunch tray rather than a stew, ya dig?). You can hear influences of MARKED MEN, REIGNING SOUND, TOYS THAT KILL, and even MODEST MOUSE. Or maybe that's just what RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS sound like, I don't know, I've never listened to them before. I actually thought RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS and COMPULSIVE GAMBLERS were the same band until a minute ago. Is your interest peaked by all the awesome bands I just name-dropped? Would it help if I informed you that this was recorded with Grammy Award winning sound engineer Stuart Sikes?! Aw, *hell yeah*!! (FS)
(Twistworthy)

GLUE – "Enemy" EP

If you didn't catch GLUE on their recent tour, then sorry chums, you missed out. Hailing from Austin, TX and claiming members of CREAMERS, BLOTTER, RECIDE and more, they forge pissed off hardcore with freak punk, emanating exhilarating moments of adrenaline, followed by incontrollable surges of anger—suitable for floor-thumping fits of blinding rage. "Enemy" oozes disdain, with rusty sharp guitars, venomous vocals and solid blasts of bass and drums, both pulsating and punishing. "Backwards Society" is a standout track, seeped in scorn so potent it's almost acidic. On the flip, "Opportunist" is a plodding, demented track, another instant favorite, while "Disgrace" breaks the proverbial chains and careers out the door,







ending with a triumphant, practically flaming solo! GLUE is the black dust cloud of destruction formed around brawls in comic books, it is the intoxicating gas cloud fuming from your erupting head; it is the ipecac for your spite. Get addicted. (LA)
(Katorga Works / Video Disease)

GO! – "Demo 1989" EP

A nice vinyl edition of this NYC fastcore/powerviolence-ish band's first works. The bassist/vocalist's name Mike Bullshit should be familiar to long-time *MRR* readers. Lots of to-the-point, blazing-fast hardcore and proto-powerviolence (as I'm sure you remember the SPAZZ sampling "Just Say Go!"). However, they get mid-paced in a few spots on Side B. While these are demo tracks, they come off fairly balanced in sound. I had no idea they covered OMD's "Electricity" but there ya go—the synth pop influence in hardcore. Nice packaging too with an essay by Mike B.S. detailing the history of the songs. Now, just GO! get this! (JD)
(Refuse)

GOLDEN PELICANS – LP

After a few 45s, these Florida total punks make good on their debut LP. While sure to please folks who tend to prefer their punk loud, smirking and snotty, there's a definite swampy, shit-kicker undercurrent here that makes the hopeless vitriol the band emits seem genuine rather than posed. I genuinely believe they've fuckin' had it when they say so, and they back it up with their loud, rude and pissed delivery. High marks for this one. Their finest outing yet. (MC)
(Total Punk)

THE GOTOBEDS – "Poor People Are Revolting" LP

Weirdly fragmented yet strangely cohesive, I tried to hate this but can't. It's like they slopped it together at the last minute but were preparing to do that for years. Sometimes it sounds like new garage-punks, PROTOMARTYR (who admittedly I've only heard live)? Sometimes I'm convinced that that one song—no, those three or four songs—were on *Perfect Sound Forever* (some total Stephen Malkmus vocals). Sometimes I wonder if I really know what WIRE actually sounds like. Sometimes I'm not sure why people bother with calling bands post-punk. Sometimes I'm curious about what happened to all the art punks and the VELVETS fans. All in all, this ain't about me, it's about this record being pretty fucking good. (PA)
(12XU)

GRAND COLLAPSE – "Far From the Callous Crowd" LP

From the stock of legendary Bristol anarcho-punk, a style that is emulated over and over, comes this new LP from GRAND COLLAPSE which is the most uncontrived, unexpected bright D-beat thrash that the punk rock timeline has to offer. There are even blackened melodies underneath proficient PROPAGHANDI-style riffage, creating an excellent genre mash-up for what is basically an anarcho-punk album. The strangulated vocals are spat out like a rabid Templeton at the veritable schmorgesborg. The vocal pitch reminds me of Bay Area contemporaries ELEGY, actually. The production is perfect. The musicianship of GRAND COLLAPSE is so skilled that they cannot be pegged down to any one clichéd style. The heavy D-beat under flailed-out endless chords, into bellowing NYHC beatdown styles, will make you want to retrace those steps like a book you just skimmed over and felt like you missed a lot of what was going on. Then you will relax and enjoy something new. This album really has everything. Melody, angst and attitude, and does not let up for a moment. Heart, soul, guts and brains. I predict every band is going to want GRAND COLLAPSE on their tour. *Far From the Callous Crowd* is destined to be a classic. I'm very proud to have done the interview layout for GRAND COLLAPSE and now to be able to review the proficiency and vehemence behind their convictions. This is how you pole-vault the sound system. (JR)
(1859 / Anarchotic / A World We Never Made / Pumpkin / Riot Ska)

THE GREAT DISMAL SWAMIS – "Phantom Toolbooth" EP

Rather basic punk'n'roll-ish stuff from Norfolk, VA. While they have a good guitar tone, the vocalist dude is *really* hit and miss. "Box Wine Bitches" has to be one of the worst song titles I've *ever* heard (and I've listened to *thousands* of metal records!), yet the song itself isn't actually awful overall. Thankfully, they get better with the DIDJITS-like title track, which has wailing guitars and also mixes SUPERNOVA (the AmRep one) and the MARKED MEN. A mixed bag of sounds pressed on mushy peas-colored vinyl. (JD)
(RZO)

HIP PRIESTS – "Black Denim Blitz" CD

From the looks of this, I thought it was going to be horrible. Rock'n'roll dudes and some artwork with a gal showing a lot of skin, shall we say. But this British combo rocks insanely hard. Total greaser gearhead rock and roll and proto-punk with some STOOGES, MURDER CITY DEVILS, TURBONEGRO, and MISFITS in the mix. As their jean jacket logo says, "Born To Booze, Live To Sin"—no shocker there. These are not pop songs, these guys just want to rock and roll at a frantic pace and they do it well. A ripper! (RL)
(AM / Selfdestructo)

HUMAN THERAPY – "American Dream" EP

This is a repress of HUMAN THERAPY's 1983 *Domesticated People* EP, with a couple of bonus tracks tacked on at the end. This is my first exposure to these SoCal goons and I have mixed feelings. Overall, the music is pretty good, driving, early '80s SoCal punk, but it's also a little hokey and feels like a precursor to hair metal and the '90s "alternative" scene. The lyrics just go nowhere…"I see so many people standing in my way / I wish they'd go away." There are some good stories in the insert about hanging out in alleys and listening to these guys practice back in the day, but it just doesn't hold up for me. If this band is your #1 jam, don't listen to my babble. It's a good reissue and the packaging is top-notch. It just sailed right past me. (GH)
(Artcore)

IMPO AND THE TENTS – "Peek After A Poke" LP

If you told me this was some newly uncovered power pop gem from 1979, I would totally have believed it. It's snappy and catchy and just plain excellent. Sometimes I think of the POINTED STICKS, other times the UNDERTONES. If you like power pop, I guarantee you'll be bouncing your head and tapping your feet in no time at all. They blew this one out of the water. On red vinyl. (KK)
(Alien Snatch!)

INSTITUTE – "Giddy Boys" EP

Whoa, hey, this is pretty sweet. WIPERS meets PEDESTRIANS?! So… melodic, dark, clean guitars but more plodding, less poppy. This also evokes CRISIS with a categorically Australian blasé. Jeez, this is head and shoulders above most of what you hear… and maybe it's a cop out to start immediately comparing them to other bands, but I don't care because what's also immediately clear is that this is more than just a clever amalgamation of the bands listed as reference points. It's unique and interesting in its own right… and it j-j-jams. This is a great listen and a winner from Katorga Works. (P$)
(Katorga Works)

INTELLIGENCE – "Boredom and Terror / Let's Toil" 2xLP

The smartest people in the room or the dumbest? Did the AUSMUTEANTS hears the INTELLIGENCE before writing their better songs? Did everyone forget about this noisesploitation deconstructor band? This is not as good as HOT & COLD, but you can only make music that sounds this much like you don't give a shit by yourself. Get two or three people into a room who don't give a shit either and you have avant-punk getting down to body music. The guitars sound fuzzy as shit (so cool) and I am reminded of downtown New York, black leather, SUICIDE, and the LAMPS and MUMMIES. The bass sounds really massive, some riffs could be fax machines dancing to a noisy recording, and some of the songs would make more sense if the arrangements were given room to breathe. INTELLIGENCE's sense of funkiness is their best artistic touch, while they give repetition their own

demented twist. It's refreshing to hear a noisy rock band with a pretty good understanding of levels and shifting dynamics, and the ground they cover in terms of sound experimentation is diverse though unmistakably theirs. For fans of locked groove bleeping, haunted synths, smelly couches and broken equipment. (LA + LP)
(In the Red)

IRON HAND – "Injected Fear" LP

Seven tracks of tense D-beat hardcore from one of the best bands to come out of Connecticut in recent memory, this is IRON HAND's first full-length following two 7"s and an absolutely unreal demo tape from back in 2008. Three years have passed since their last release, but the basic M.O. is more or less unchanged: driving crust of the latter-day America-goes-Scandi variety, offset by forays into anthemic hardcore in the vein of RAW NERVES. Powerful stuff! I used to live in the same town as some of these dudes back when they still played in the underappreciated THEY AND THE CHILDREN, one of the first "modern" hardcore bands to resonate with me, and both bands share a lyrical and musical intelligence that easily sets them apart from the pack. Sadly, I moved across the country a few months before they played their first shows… still kicking myself for never catching the chaos live. (WB)
(Safety Meeting)

IRON LUNG – "Savagery" EP

The band claims this is their angriest record to date and that might just be true. The intensity we are accustomed to from their previous output is surely present, but the downright anger (dare I say savagery?!) is turned up to eleven. Familiar elements of the band abound on the new EP, game changing and genre defining powerviolence recorded with pristine execution and a decade plus of experience to stand on. I spent some good time listening to their older releases to give some perspective on this one, and I found it quite hard to highlight what is changing in their music that keeps every listen interesting. Old and new, their records blow me away and have become the gold standard of extreme music. The production on this EP is stellar, definitely tipping this release over the top and into *crucial* territory. The constant refinement and organic growth has kept their game strong and this is another exemplary release from one of the best in the biz. Twelve tracks that average about thirty seconds that can easily stretch into half an hour as repeated listens for riff wizardry and percussive misbelief trap you. I hear something new on each spin and even, bass? Is that a bass riff at the end of Side B? Low numbers on black, more on green vinyl. Each cover unique, inside poster art is as awesome as ever! (RM)
(Iron Lung)

IVY – 12"

This NYC band's vinyl debut fits neatly into the present surge in eccentric hardcore output, such as that of their Katorga labelmates WICCANS or even VEXX. However, I'm not trying to say that this challenging and peculiar release sounds quite like anything else out there. Their sound seems most immediately indebted to the GERMS, transmitting more attitude than pure aggression. IVY doesn't give off a belligerent vibe, but rather finds itself shrouded in self-destructiveness and cynical hopelessness. They are super bummed! The drumming is interesting and off-kilter, lacking a predictable formula or consistent speed. Guitar leads chime in over the noisy rhythms providing sporadic hooks to cling to. I like that the vocals opt for an old school snotty quality as opposed to the less stylized and unintelligible power yell popular these days. Lyrical content varies between banality, angry desperation, and free association. The hit for me is "Antsy" where the oscillating tempo and whirlwind melody pull me in between the disparate start and end points. I dig the stamped cover artwork with double images that are all slightly off: a faulty mirror image, an inversion, a negative, but never a true semblance or parallel. Could this be a metaphor for the record housed within? I think fans of current hardcore will enjoy dissecting and studying this thing. (LT)
(Katorga Works)

JAWBREAKER – "24 Hour Revenge Therapy" LP

Looks like the assigning gods here at *MRR* have called my bluff. I have never owned a JAWBREAKER record and, honestly, reviewing this 20th anniversary reissue may be the first time I have sat down and knowingly listened to one of their albums straight through. That said, I've always been a big fan of bands that sound like JAWBREAKER and recognize that their influence (especially this album's) on melodic punk/pop-punk/emo is immeasurable. The tropes in those genres of gruff vocals, hooks and the self-deprecating sentimentality of lyrics that walk the fine line between earnest and cringe-worthy have almost become cliché at this point. Honestly, of all the "classic" '90s Bay Area punk bands JAWBREAKER probably has had the longest lasting musical influence. Yeah, GREEN DAY and RANCID became *huge* and busted the dam that resulted in the flood of the young punks of my generation, but there have been, hands down, more bands that *sound* like JAWBREAKER than either of those others. Reviewing this 20 years later is hard, because it's like reviewing an entire style of punk. The extra material on this reissue comes in the download, which consists of alternative takes of "The Boat Dream From The Hill" (with a surprisingly *very* SCREECHING WEASEL-esque lead guitar line), "Boxcar," "Do You Still Hate Me?," "Jinx Removing," and two outtakes—"First Step" and "Friends Back East." These bonus takes are probably really interesting to a diehard lifelong fan, but to me they sound like rough mix tracks that were understandably cast aside. I'm glad to see the record back in print, but this is definitely one for the completists. I'm sure you already know what this band and record sound like. If you don't, you're not punk—and I'm telling everyone. (FU)
(Blackball)

J.C. SATAN – "Italian Summer" EP

This definitely has a sub-genre niche that I see it happily falling into… Two songs from these boys from Bordeaux. *Dis-moi ce que tu manges, je te dirai ce que tu es* and this band has been consuming contemporary garage rock and the TROGGS. And despite this record finding the turntable of a reviewer totally indifferent to most garage rock, it left me feeling a little something. In large part it's because of the genuine but subtle, sincere sixties vibez that emanate from it. It's double denim and a tie-dye shirt, garage stomp with '60s pop. (P$)
(Trouble in Mind)

KING SALAMI & THE CUMBERLAND THREE / ANDRE WILLIAMS & THE GOLDSTARS – split LP

Andre Williams is a dirty old man, drug addict, fucking genius legend. He had his own '60s Detroit hits and wrote gold for a few very famous folk. I saw him at, I think, his first comeback show in SF and he was doing cocaine in the bathroom and spouting off filthy things on stage to the soundtrack of some forreal greasy R&B. This record ain't so hot. The songs are pretty corny and Mr. Williams is just kinda talking his vocals. On "The Hard Way" it seems like he went for a bathroom break and never came back leaving the band to finish it up by repeating the cheesy chorus over and over. I have no idea who KING SALAMI is or what his deal is all about. Pretty fucking hokey. Sounds like some Euro smoky bar rock'n'roll revival band. White people dancing funny and me headed out the door for a smoke. (RO)
(Be Fast Records)

KNARK / KRÜGER – split EP

When I held this up from my reviewer's station to show Robert he was like, "You know what that's gonna sound like." And I know what he meant, and I didn't disagree. It's a drawing of a post-apocalyptic industrial shit-hole graveyard type thing—like something from an ICONS OF FILTH record. The thing is, it's great! Czech Republic's KRÜGER does crust with a phenomenal D-beat drummer and trade-off vocals like a heavier FLEAS AND LICE. KNARK is from Sweden and plays a really catchy style of hardcore punk, life if FY FAN veered away from the D-beat template. Driving rhythms, good riffs, simple arrangements, and that gravelly hang-on-to-one-snotty-pitch vocal style. Killer. (MA)
(GRF / Kalla Handen, no info / Mocko, no info / Nuclear Madness / Opposition, no info / Rawmantic Disasters / Raw Zine / Uvhylny Koš, no info / Ventilatorr, no info / Véva, no info / Wolfdrunk, no info)

KRANG – "Bad Moon" LP

After the first song on this LP I wondered if I was dreaming about my twenties. KRANG seem to have a fascination with '80s crusty metal. Melodramatic intros, guitar solos everywhere, thin and tiny production, a crappy (but good) guitar tone, and sometimes distant vocals. You get the idea. A less heavy DEVIATED INSTINCT comes to mind. It's somewhat crusty; it has that slight stench, but doesn't fall into the trap of just copying a sound of the past. They hail from Chicago, IL and have members that have done time with EXPENDABLE YOUTH, SECURICOR, DECAY AFTER DEATH, and BLACK SEPTEMBER. My main complaint is there are too many unnecessary guitar solos, and most of the time when there is a solo it's as if the rest of the band stops to allow the solo center stage. In an odd way, it's like stadium rock. Other releases from KRANG don't seem to have this issue—I like their *Broken Waves* release more than this one. (MH)
(Sacred Plague / Occult Whispers / Shaman / Profane Existence)

THE LICKERS – "Get Licker'd" CD

I have a feeling that these people like to get drunk, judging by the picture of seven or eight different types of booze being poured into someone's mouth on the front cover. Oh, and the band name is fairly telling. Besides getting drunk, this band also plays fairly tight, tuneful, mid-paced rock/punk/bar rock. The woman singing for this band has a decent voice, but sounds like she hasn't found her footing just yet—like she could probably belt it out a little harder and really give the band the push they need to be great. Overall though, this is a good CD. Not great, but good. (GH)
(self-released)

LIVING ALONE – LP

How do you like your pop punk? Triumphant? Anthemic? Slightly emo? Well, if you answered, "yes" to all three, we have something for you here. These Denver kids give us a six-song LP bathed in admiration for LATTERMAN, and filled with (at least) a week's worth of "Whoa-ohs." Catchy tunes, backed with lyrics about internal struggle, and dealing with consciousness. Serious vocals, silly album art (the Midwest pop punk special). A good record, this one's for all you dreamers out there. (FS)
(Sonic Mystics)

LUUM – "My Home" EP

It's rare to hear a band that lands in the hardcore realm but somehow manages to remain indescribable. Southern California's LUUM are dark and noisy, but with jerky tempos and a style that is actually their own. GASP is the closest comparison I can conjure, but that's a vibe thing way more than a sound thing because LUUM is just fukkn weird. Third listen and I'm still trying to put a finger on why I'm drawn to this…what if MINUTEMEN were a psychedelic hardcore band? You'd listen, right? Exactly. (WN)
(self-released)

MAIMED FOR LIFE – LP

'80s hardcore reissues sometimes seem to be almost as common as new records, and the inevitable result is a plethora of second tier recordings getting the royal treatment. There are moments on this MAIMED FOR LIFE record that are absolutely worthy of preservation, and the vocals reek of Dan/DIE KREUZEN in the best way, but most of these tracks leave me pretty fukkn flat. It's more than competent crossover along the lines of DRI or MDC with an unnecessarily overproduced recording that overshadows a few certified bangers. Tracks from their '85 EP and another session, one of these dudes played on *Feel The Darkness*. (WN)
(National Dust)

MASSIVE EGO – "Don't" LP

Chicago based loons that can't seem to make up their mind about if they want to do a good mix of garage punk/early '90s indie and psych or craptastic FLAMING LIPS-styled, hippy bummer strumming. Said bad trip comes from the latter part of this record, which also features a tune that's like a schizoid SEBADOH mixed with YES. Plus, I wish they'd nix the dopey text speak on their song titles, e.g. "H34VY H34VY". Their profile says they play DIY venues but I get the feeling they're really looking to play the next Pitchfork fest. (JD)
(Maximum Pelt)

STE MCCABE – "Brains Of Britain" CD

Don't know nothing about this Scottish geezer. And not quite sure that it fits within the remit of this fine publication either, for that matter. I guess it'd be punk, if one takes the incredibly liberal 1977 "broad-church" definition of the moniker. Y'know, like the SWELL MAPS, or early HUMAN LEAGUE, or JOY DIVISION, or WIRE were considered punk back in the day. These days, "indie" or quirky college rock would be more appropriate tags, I would posit. Unfortunately, STE doesn't quite have the classy tunes of the aforementioned. The drum machine is annoying, and just when it seems he might be getting it together with a catchy riff / melody, it subsides quickly into, well, just not very good. BILLY BRAGG contributes to one of the more "experimental" (i.e. even worse) cuts. (RK)
(self-released)

MEATBODIES – "Rotten/Mud Gals"

MEATBODIES is CHAD UBOVICH, the bassist from FUZZ. On this 7" he plays sludgy, heavy BLACK SABBATH inspired rock. I prefer the light, acoustic pop-ness of his first In The Red 7"—"Wahoo" is such a great catchy song. Maybe the nouveau garage scene is starting to get sick of being wussy and just needs to rock it out. Good for them. However, metal, heavy or otherwise, just doesn't do it for me. I think I'll pass on this phase. (CK)
(In The Red)

MEATBODIES / WAND – split EP

My first exposure to these newly appointed leaders of the new school, both of whom are from Southern California. MEATBODIES come highly touted and feature a member of FUZZ. Their installment is fine nu-garage, which is to say not garage at all but psych-punk that places equal emphasis on guitar crunch as on locked-in rhythm grooving. It doesn't hold a candle to something like MONOSHOCK, but I'm interested enough to want to hear more meat. WAND's sound is close enough to make the split seem sonically logical, though their melding of sunshine '60s vox with squirrelly guitar noise seems to dominate and make for the more refreshing listen between the two. Both bands probably destroy live, both probably have seventeen

records each at this point, and both are probably every 24-year-old's nowadays faves. (MC)
(In the Red)

THE MIDWEST BEAT – "Free of Being" CD

Some jangly-as-hell garage rock from the great state of Wiscons! The MIDWEST BEAT have been around for a handful of years now, and have refined their garage/rock/pop sound to perfection. BEACH BOYS-esque harmonies and some BYRDS/FLYING BURRITO BROTHERS country-tinged twang, with a dash of the kind of modern/classic sound that GREG CARTWRIGHT / REIGNING SOUND have going on. For all of you with a GOODNIGHT LOVING shaped hole in your heart, this is the perfect fit. I wouldn't necessarily classify this type of rock'n'roll as "maximum," but it's definitely quality. Recommended listening for lazy days, hazy nights, or political protests at the steps of the state capital (the MIDWEST BEAT did their civic duty and performed for the masses gathered in Madison protesting Gov. Walker and his Orwellian titled "Wisconsin Budget Repair Bill."). Available from three different labels, covering Europe, Japan, and the US. Smart thinking there, fellas! (FU)
(Dusty Medical / Waterslide / Wild Honey)

MUSTAT KALSARIT – "Liikaa Hälinää" EP

Shit, I wish I had a better knowledge base to draw on when describing this band. It's got a good kind of swing to it, very garage-y punk with one track that's a total blues stomper and another that's a mellow almost alt-country number. Charmingly simple solos are the highlights of the punkier tracks, which owe as much to the '60s garage movement as they do '77 punk. Much to my surprise, I think the heavily distorted blues dirge ("Musta Piste") is the best of the bunch, with its barely on-key vocal and raunchy guitar tone. Check this out if you like…? Fuck, I dunno. Check it out if you've got the attention span to dig on bands that offer a diverse range of styles and do all of them pretty well, I guess. A good record to put on when you're sippin' whiskey and in a mellow mood. (AU)
(Hyster / Jumatsuga / Rock'n'roll Bullshit / TNT)

MYSTIC INANE – "Deep Creep" EP

MYSTIC INANE put out a demo tape a few years back, and have toured a bunch, but I think this is their first vinyl appearance?! Which is a shame as this features at least one ex-NECRO HIPPIE going off in a fried hardcore SACCHARINE TRUST vs. SPIKE IN VAIN wormhole, total tripper maniac sound! Both songs on the A-Side will have you doin' the creepy crawl round your room in an uncontrollable fashion, so classic and venomous and sick! Candice's guitar sound brings to mind so many of the greats, eerie and nihilistic and true, formed in a cave somewhere beneath the CRUSI-FUCKS and RUDIMENTARY PENI. The vocalist has a death sneer like JACK BREWER meets MARK E. SMITH and even KEITH MORRIS… The rhythm section is tireless and doomed, and fuck, this record is great! The B-side is like slowed down syrupy NEOS. I honestly don't remember the tape being this cool? I mean I liked it a lot, but this is fucking raging. I am gonna need more! (LG)
(Negative Jazz)

NEGATIVE SCANNER – "Ambitious People" EP

It's triumphant and almost indie rock but somehow still sounds kind of like VICE SQUAD or something of that ilk. Or wait, it's kind of like the STRANGLERS but I wouldn't be surprised if I heard an Oi! in there. Or maybe I would be. This is England in the late seventies with the knowledge of now, smoothed out and sheered down to where it's nearly familiar but not. I feel like there is a doppelgänger band to this and it's at the tip of my tongue. This is familiar but unplaceable, but not in an exhilarating way, just in a way that makes me think my music knowledge is not encyclopedic. (MM)
(Trouble In Mind)

THE NUMBER ONES – LP

This group of yokes from Dublin shot to internet fame a while back on the strength of the video for their catchiest song thus far, "Sharon Shouldn't." That song is indeed an instant classic—it could've been a hit in any pop era. If you heard that song and wondered if the band could back it up with more of the same, wonder no more. While it's definitely the best song on the album, you won't be calling them "THE NUMBER ONE-hit wonders." Upbeat, infectious power pop songs of youthful heartbreak for folks who can't get enough of the TRANZMITORS, EXPLODING HEARTS, or any number of history's pop heroes. Pick it up, you won't be sorry. (AM)
(Static Shock)

OVENS – "Feel Like Shit" EP

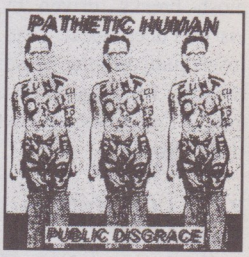
I'm guessing that this (almost) ten-year-old recording is just now seeing the light of day because Tony Molina's solo shit has recently been blowing up. Whatever the reasoning, I'm glad to hear it because this rules. OVENS is a San Francisco band that Molina and friends have played in for years that, like Molina's solo work, incorporates the best elements of the FASTBACKS (one of the best bands in the world) and THIN LIZZY while smashing them down into bite-size bits. The results are some phenomenally catchy, shred-tastic jams. The instrumental outro on the A-Side sounds like a direct rip-off of the BEATLES song "I Want You (She's So Heavy)" which is fine by me since that song is sick as fuck. If you like guitar-heavy, super-pop FASTBACKS-worship, you'll wanna snatch this up if you see it. First pressing is gone, second is rumored to be on the way. (GH)
(Melters)

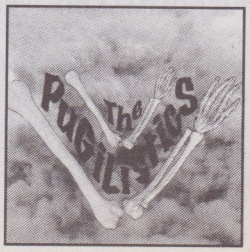
PAIN DIMENSION – "Brainwash" EP

This is pretty cool, but definitely not what most would consider "Kennycore." It plods along at a very deliberate pace. It's eerie and dark, with a fair amount of scary lead guitar and the vocals convey some agony. But it's also very garagey and melodic. The B-Side, where they pick up the pace just a bit, shows some real '60s influence. Really excellent. It's limited to 250 numbered copies and *MRR* has one of them, so you'll need to get your ass in gear. Move it, punk. (KK)
(Croque Macadam / Requiem Pour Un Twister)

PANKRTI – "Lepi In Prazni" EP

Damn! This is a deluxe repress of this Slovenian band's first 45 from 1978 with two extra demo songs tacked on, which haven't really seen the light of day since they were recorded (before the single). The first song, "Lepi In Prazni" is easily the best song on here and would sound right at home on any *Killed By Death* compilation. It's bouncy and catchy. A perfect punk song. "There's no hope anymore / It was run over





by a tank / What to else than play punk?" The B-Side of that original single "Lublana Je Bulana," is in the same vein: pissed, catchy '70s punk. What a perfect original record! The demo songs are a little more in a rock vein in that way where people were still sort of confused about how to play punk in the late '70s. The vocals are still pissed and negative, but the effect doesn't feel as immediate and urgent. I guess it's good to unearth these extra songs after so many years, but the original record easily holds up on its own. (GH)
(Ne!)

PATHETIC HUMAN – "Public Disgrace" EP

Holy moly, this deserves a patented Robert Collins double-k "fukk"! Ultra-rabid low-fi powerviolence-inspired hardcore that totally poos on most bands that have attempted the style. The fast parts are as much D.R.I. as they are INFEST and the slow parts sound like MAN IS THE BASTARD covering classic NYHC mosh breaks, driven by the thick bass and visceral deep vocal. Yeah, I fukkin dig this shit. Insert indicates that it was recorded in 2009, so who the fuck knows what's up with this band today? Regardless, it's definitely a keeper. (AU)
(Helta Skelta)

P.F. COMMANDO – "Manipulerade Mongon" LP

I'm happy to be burdened this month with two seminal Swedish reissues. Coming a couple punk generations before PROTES BENGT, this is arguably the first Swedish punk LP, originally released in the spring of 1979 and now affordably available from Ugly Pop. P.F. COMMANDO, which supposedly stands for PUNK FORCE COMMANDO (how cool is that?), play great first wave punk with a distinctly Swede bent, mixing English and Swedish lyrics. The whole LP is mastered beautifully, standing out amongst the slew of '77-styled bands that emerged around the world. Ugly Pop did a great job, including an informative booklet putting the whole band in context. I'm not one of those people who love everything in this style, but this nails it. The album closer "No No No" seals the deal with a proto-hardcore burst of pure punk nihilism: "Do you like politics? Do you like disco freaks? Do you like to go to school? Do you want to have a job? No no no! No no no! We don't like anything, we just want to sing: no no no! No no no!" Yes yes yes. (SZ)
(Ugly Pop)

P.F. COMMANDO – "Rough Sound" EP

A nice reissue of this Swedish punk band's second EP from 1980. This is not nearly as pricey or sought after as their debut, but it has some cool tracks on it. "Rough Sound" and "Tv" are raw and spunky KBD ragers, while "Nu Ska Vi Ha Kul" is less urgent and bouncier. Considering the abundance of reissues that are happening these days, I wouldn't file this under "necessary," but it's definitely a worthwhile release with some great old Swedish punk tunes. (MA)
(Ugly Pop)

THE PHOENIX FOUNDATION – "Echoes" 12"

This would be good if they weren't trying to be a pop punk band so much of the time. The record starts out with an instrumental that is a poppy rock version of a Midwest emo style song. It really shows off their ability to play but without technicality interfering with their ability to write a catchy song. Then the vocals come in on the second song and even the music changes and it's just an up-tempo pop punk song, not that overly distorted, guff stuff but just bland, poppy pop punk. Most of the record falls in that line. It's not that they don't know how to write good pop songs. "Fooling" is upbeat and catchy, it sounds like the LEMONHEADS, it's the best song on here, it makes the record worth buying just for its two minutes of greatness. So yeah, it's there, just not all there (PA)
(Combat Rock Industry)

P.I.G.Z. – "Bloody Belgium" EP

"Belgium is a *mess*. And that's *not half bad*!" spits Yves Lafere before an anthemic guitar creeps in, finally breaking out into what can and should only be considered a Punk with a capital "P" classic! From the catchy riffing to the biting, emphasized vocals and jittery drums that seem to want to race ahead, "Bloody Belgium" is to P.I.G.Z. what "Blitzkrieg Bop" was to the RAMONES: an emblematic magnum opus epitomizing their sound and aesthetic. "Is this Democracy, or is this *blindness?"* he chastises and squeals, everything sounding charismatically shambolic but utterly electrified. On the flip, "Stooges" slams in with an attitude-filled riff, not unlike the way "God Save the Queen" does, and has a distinctly heavy tone akin to that of the STOOGES or MC5, with steel-hard chords and Lafere snarling, "too many problems *in my life*, too many problems 'cause *I wanna be me*!" Closer "Shall I" is the snottiest of the lot, a short, severe, hand-clapping reaction to societal expectations and identity frustration—timeless teenage rampage! JW's Records originally pressed these three crown jewels of Belgian punk to a 12" after the band won first place in 1978's First Belgian Punk Contest, and they were re-released once again by German Payola Records that same year. Both are apparently rare as fuck so Ugly Pop has done us all a massive favor and made these three perfectly p-u-n-k masterpieces available yet again; remastered and packaged beautifully, with pictures, reprints of newspaper clippings and an intro text framing this seminal, absolutely essential record. (LA)
(Ugly Pop)

PILLAGE – "Demo 2013" EP

Thanks to the good people at Germany's RSR label, this scorching demo got the treatment it deserves and was quickly pressed up on a batch of 7" platters. For us mouth breathers scrambling to find a copy of the elusive tape, a clean vinyl copy is just as tasty! This crash course opens with the hardest intro one can reasonably handle before losing it, on par with heavy weights like RIVAL MOB or WORLD WAR 4, but taking a musical turn toward the short punishing style of members past projects. With forces that brought us bands like CHARLES BRONSON, MK ULTRA, HERDS, LOSER LIFE and LOS CRUDOS, this is a superior document of real deal hardcore. Definitely a soundtrack to rally the crew to get unhinged and terrorize the night. Heavy and fast, SIEGE cover included. (RM)
(RSR)

PLASTIX – "Konsumier Mich" EP

Fuck! One of those bands where you're like, "how have I missed this my entire life?" Short-lived Viennese post-punk from 1981, these three tracks were previously released on the great *Die Tödliche Dosis* compilation, the band's only other vinyl appearance and one which has been in constant rotation in the compound as of late. The swing of the MO-DETTES meets a more frantic KLEENEX, with an absolutely amazing and distinctive vocalist, a compelling combination of the power and melody of ARI UP with the percussiveness of HONEY BANE or the woman from ANOREXIA. They say the singer wore clear plastic outfits when they played and in my dreams there's a Peel Session and a ton of live footage waiting to be unearthed for me to freak out over. The panting, shrieking "Geschlechtsverkehr" is the winner here, but all three of these songs are absolutely killer. Limited to 500 copies, get this one now! (GA)
(Danger)

PROTES BENGT – "In Bengt We Trust" EP

As much as I love ANTI-CIMEX, sometimes I want every song to be less than a minute long. This is perfect for that. So sick. PROTES BENGT was a band made of MOB 47 members plus the future singer of FILTHY CHRISTIANS and they sound exactly like what you would think. This reissued EP has the requisite 32 songs, all of them perfectly succinct blasts of classic Swedish mangel. If you like SHITLICKERS (and honestly, I can't think of any reason you wouldn't other than ignorance) you really should get this. (SZ)
(Insane Society)

MICHAEL PSYCHO – "Think" LP

If such as thing as a punk *Acid Archives* could ever exist, Michael Psycho would find a prominent place in it. Getting its first wide release after 24 years of no-joke obscurity, the lone offering from this forgotten Sacramento son really does come off as a DIY-punk showstopper. Throughout the LP's 18 minute assault, we're treated to very urgent, off punk akin to MIKE REP's gusto-garage, '80s acid-fried hardcore and classic punk damage, much of it approaching the GERMS at their formative beginnings. Had this LP come

out in 1980 (hell, maybe even 2000), it'd be cited here, there, and everywhere as a real-deal biggie. Instead, we're all just now catching up. In any event, punks of all stripes should hop to. "Think" is an LP that the freaks will freak out over, and I count myself amongst them. (MC)
(SS Records)

PUGILISTICS – "One Life" EP

If Bruce Roehrs were around this woulda been assigned to him. Straight ahead NEGATIVE APPROACH meets Nardcore style HC put together by some veteran punkers from AZ who probably saw those bands play back in the day. Not close to as killer as NA, but what is? This is just some meat and potatoes HC, but it comes from a genuine place. If you bought *Thrasher Skate Rock* when it came out you might dig this… Honestly I can't imagine anyone but their friends truly going wild to this, and there's no contact info included on this record, but if you wanna investigate it looks like they have an old myspace page… (LG)
(self-released)

RADIO 77 – "Punks Not Dead… It Just Smells Like It" EP

This record came with a PSYCHIC TV sticker, unaltered save for a small "R 77" on it. After listening to this EP that sticker makes no sense whatsoever, but that was already made clear to me when I saw the song title "Sprinkles on a Punk Rock Cake." This is Epitaph records demo material circa 1996: kind of pop punk, maybe just okay, but mostly uninteresting and really confusing because it was recorded in 2013. RADIO 77 clearly do not give a shit about pixilation, because this artwork is smothered in poor resolution. I guess that's cool. For what it's worth, Side B is better than Side A, because Side A is garbage with a fake/vaguely British by way of RANCID accent. Thanks for the PTV sticker that I will, like RADIO 77, also alter ever so slightly. (SZ)
(Tol)

RAMMA LAMMA – "Ice Cream" LP

RAMMA LAMMA? As in "Rama Lama Fa Fa Fa"? Words uttered by the immortal brother Rob Tyner. No. This is some good time poppy rock'n'roll punk maybe like the DEVIL DOGS but not dirty. There're both male and female vocals. There're cute comics on the lyric sheet. It's all just… cute. I'm little too ugly for cute these days; but maybe it works for you. (RO)
(Certified PR)

RANCID VAT – "We're Still Better Than You" CD

Phil Irwin and Marla Vee are still at it over 30 years later! I doubt they ever went away. Most of my memories of RANCID VAT are with the late Howard "The Cosmic Commander of Wrestling" Saunders on vocals. I have fond fuzzy memories of some members hanging out at my old house on McAllister Street. I think someone unfamiliar with this bands history may be perplexed listening to this. RANCID VAT is a combination of art rock, country, southern rock and whatever they feel like at the moment. There're a couple older songs redone to give some perspective on this disc. The Whiskey Rebel's jazzy circus blues guitar style remains the same. RANCID VAT is a band that refuses to compromise for listeners even if there's no one listening. Long live The Whiskey Rebel. Long live RANCID VAT! (RO)
(Brilliancy Prize, no info)

RAPTUS DI FOLLIA – "Warzone" EP

Ugh, it pains me to say it but this is the definition of medio-core. Crust influenced hardcore with a way too clean recording and a distinct lack of memorable hooks. There's just no venom in the vocals, no urgency in the songwriting, and the few cool rocking licks sound too out of place with the rest of the material to elevate it. Utterly cliché lyrics are just the icing on this super bland cake. On the plus side, this EP does come on really fucking thick vinyl. So there's that, I guess. (AU)
(Dirt Fi)

RAZOR SMILEZ – "Foreign Feather" LP

One way to warm this jaded black heart is a handmade record cover. This is a beautiful little amphetamine art project of scotch tape, glue sticks and feathers. I don't know anything about this band but it's a covers record. To my fuzzy brain's recognition, I think it's all covers or mostly so. They have excellent taste in music, but is a covers record necessary? To me, no. They are a good band and the covers with female vocals at least add a spin on the male-fronted songs. My favorites are the BIG BOYS' "No Love" and LOS VIOLADORES' "Viejos Pateticos." Maybe a good party record. (RO)
(American Feather, no info)

REAGAN'S POLYP – "Facefuckingbatspermantidotepudding" CD

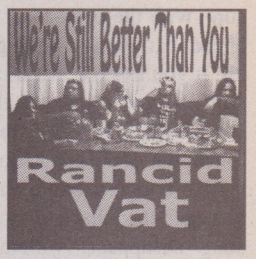
What the? Full disclosure, I love stupid, odd, weird music and that often leads me to outsider bands. Beautiful souls that, for better or worse, make music. This can mean anything from JAD FAIR to the SHAGGS. But it can also mean anything from FAXED HEAD to SECRET CHIEF 3. REAGAN's POLYP is such a stupid band. This is no genre, they sound like no one else and, well, they make MR BUNGLE sound like normals. If it's an act, it's a good one. Twin brothers who look like they fell asleep in the southern sun, which would be Arkansas. Music that goes all over the place and at times sounds improvised. Sometimes explicitly sex-oriented lyrics like, "I don't want to fuck you" repeated over and over, or better/worse. Yeah there is some punk, some metal, some lounge, some funk and a lot of stupidity. If the story is true, they went broke doing a 2006 West Coast tour, but left behind over 30 albums recorded. Ugh, huh? You get a 30-track CD that covers every important topic, including "They installed Teeth In My Ass," "Urdugu, Princess of Pain Planet," "Turn Off Your TV," "Weird Lady on the Subway" and "Suspect Chicken Procedures." Beautiful. Absolutely fucking beautiful. (MH)
(Vetoxa)

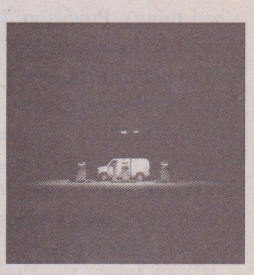
THE REAL TEARS – CD

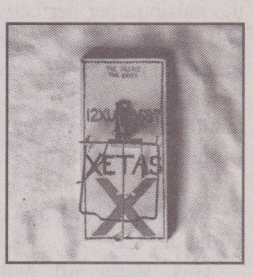
This is some tough talkin', hard drivin', whiskey drenched, bore you to tears rock'n'roll. Compare to the HOOKERS or JACK SAINTS but not good. (RO)
(self released, no info)

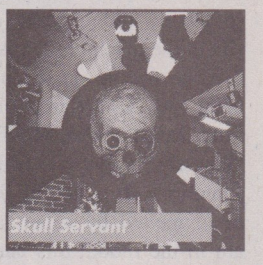
RED KATE – "WHEN THE TROUBLES COME" LP

Punk rawk'n'roll from Kansas City with songs alternating between political rallies ("Well, I'm gonna tell ya again / that the boss is not your friend") and brokenhearted love songs ("Trying to have a talk with you, girl / is like a silent picture show"). This is heavy on the rock, for









sure, with the occasional straying into straight-ahead bar rock—nothing wrong with that at all, if you ask me. All in all this is some decent stuff. If you're into the themes that bands like DILLINGER FOUR or the CAPITALIST KIDS touch, but don't mind some slower tempos with a little boogie-woogie and last call for alcohol swagger, then this is right up your alley. Also the song "Disappear" (with the great lyric "So if you get smacked down / by the invisible hand / you can always feed the war machine's / eternal demand") sounds like a slowed down *Understand?* era NAKED RAYGUN song—something I can get behind 100%. (FU)
(Replay)

RORT – "Warpath" LP

Manically riffy death-flavored grind from Melbourne, Australia, the fourteen tracks of RORT's debut LP blur relentlessly into one another, making for an exhausting, almost nauseating listen (in this genre, that's not at all a bad thing). Precision drumming and brilliant tremolo leads win the day here—these guys know how to mine the noodle-y glory of ye old school death metal to perfection, and it makes the whole affair miles more fun than your run-o'-the-mill blastfest. There's a more anthemic hXc element that occasionally comes to the fore, with some of the vocal hooks bringing a slightly moshy feel. Wrathful lyrics take on societal disgust as well as individualized hatred. A bit of a metal/hardcore word salad for my taste, but it matches the music rather perfectly. Modern grind heads and hardcore kids who yearn for the glory days of MORBID ANGEL should not hesitate to pull the trigger on this one, and I can only imagine that these guys *slay* live. (WB)
(Regurgitated Semen)

SCREAMING FEMALES – "Live at the Hideout" CD

This starts off with a rather lengthy "routine," which was so weird and unexpected that I had to check the CD player twice to make sure somebody didn't leave a stand up comedian CD in the machine. Turns out, it was one of my favorite people on the planet, Al Scorch, just being Al, and introducing the band. I'm a little weird about SCREAMING FEMALES. Honestly, they are ridiculously good, but sometimes I'm not in the mood to have my mind melted by super intricate rock. When I am in the mood, this band has never failed to leave me in a stupor. If you are one of the eight punks on the planet who has not heard this band, a description won't do them justice. You could argue if this is actually punk or not, and I don't care what answer you come up with. These guys can venture into classic rock worship/jam rock a little too deep for some, but they do it so well, always keeping it powerful and vibrant. I'd like to tell you that this, being a live CD, might not be the best way to start your journey with them, but it is. The sound quality is really fucking great, showcasing Marissa's distinct wailing on her vocals and guitar without going overboard and overshadowing the rest of the band, which fucking kill as well. I'd like to point out that Marissa may very well be the best guitarist I have ever seen. Mind melting. I'm really glad this band hasn't drifted over towards the dark side, but I often ask "Why not?" Why aren't these guys stupid famous? If this were on vinyl, it'd be my favorite thing right now. It's gooood! Oh, I just read the inner sleeve, and if you are into this sorta thing, it was recorded by that Albini dude. (DZ)
(Don Giovanni)

SIAMESE TWINS – "Still Corner" LP

It's not always true that you shouldn't judge a book (or record) by its cover. This album is well-crafted throughout. The cover features the band name written with a backdrop of fall wooded flowery scenery on a solid white background, and in my opinion was the most eye-catching design work of this month's batch of records. The insert is equally as aesthetically pleasing. The music features reverb-rich post-punk guitar strikes and entrancing bass runs and synth melodies that ossicilate between being a chilly background drone and then more mid-era M83 catchiness. Floaty pretty shoegaze-inspired vocal layers whisper through the songs in a very MY BLOODY VALENTINE way. The song "Submission" is an absolute gem, though the whole album is worth many very dedicated listens. Such a thoroughly calculated presentation is extremely appreciated, and everything blossoms in this release. Truly stellar release by these Boston goth dreamers. (DV)
(Eunuch Records)

SKULL SERVANT – "Watching" EP

Ontario's SKULL SERVANT dish out late '80s-styled metallic industrial punishment on these 2011 live recordings. While the two tracks on the A-Side leave me a little flat (just kinda messy, and clean enough to sweep away what is probably a considerable amount of intensity), the title track is a four minute dirge that hones in on the terror of real and imagined paranoia—the words, the delivery and the swarm of (mostly electronic) sound punctuated by erratic percussion. At the very least, this is interesting, but in the right environment I'm guessing the vibe is intense. (WN)
(Servant Music)

SLAG – "Mind Slave" EP

This is just so fucking on point. Proudly waving the banner of San Jose Supremacy, this first 7" launches SLAG straight into the pantheon of South Bay powerviolence alongside IN DISGUST (an obvious touchstone), GODSTOMPER, T.A.D.R,O.E.V. and DEADPRESSURE. Endlessly heavy with relentless blasting and some expertly blown-out production, this record emphasizes the best elements of crust-tinted grind with not a moment of filler. Great high and low vocals too; the only bummer worth noting is the lack of a lyric sheet. Tut tut, I could have at least used that to help set a cop car on fire. Fans of new-school grindviolence from ARCHAGATHUS to YOUR ENEMY: this is your new favorite shit. (WB)
(Regurgitated Semen)

SLUGZ – LP

This outfit is a punk'n'roll band from Richmond, VA. These guys know how to play tunes, but as I listened to this LP I found myself wanting a bit more diversity in the overall songwriting. By the time I got to Side B things began to get a bit blurry. "Modern Chains" and "My Dad Ain't Shit" definitely stood out of the pack and are killer tracks. (MS)
(Feel It)

SNAKE HANDLER – "Enjoy the View" EP

After a too-short moshy intro, SNAKE HANDLER delves into heavy, disgruntled hardcore that brings to mind POISON IDEA meets SHEER TERROR, in terms of musical aesthetic, nihilism, and particularly the not-totally-top-speed pounding of the latter. It's relatively straightforward, but the riffs are fist-clenching, and the rough recording adds to the appeal. Worth picking up. (DG)
(Victimized)

SONIC CHICKEN 4 – LP

A "lost" SONIC CHICKEN 4 album recorded in 2009 as a follow-up to their great In The Red debut. As these things go, the record was postponed a few times, the band stopped playing and then it never ended up coming out. Until now, of course. I was a big fan of the first SONIC CHICKEN 4 LP. It was in my Top 10 of 2007 so I am very happy to finally hear this and it doesn't disappoint. This is catchy pop music with a weird edge. They've got one foot in the '60s garage scene and the other in '80s new wave. Mix that up with pleasantly laidback female and male vocals and you get some great tunes. It sounds so good. (CK)
(Bachelor / Dusty Medical)

STATIC IS A CITY – EP

Seriously, bands—don't let promo sheets worm their way into your record. They are a waste of words and paper, and are *always* trite. Especially when you compare yourselves to legends (or let someone else do that for you), you nearly always guarantee listener disappointment. Nearly. I read the promo flyer with this EP, which told me that I should enjoy this if I like FUGAZI and DRIVE LIKE JEHU. I was licking my lips for this to be a turd. I'm still annoyed by the awkward promo sheet, but I can hear the influences of both bands and am

glad to report this 7" does in fact rule. All aspects come together on this one. The guitar tone is dreamy and the balance is paramount. The vocals add to the dynamics of the complex sound, which is a terribly difficult thing to do in post-hardcore. The vocals are more RITES OF SPRING than either of the aforementioned but the music has a fullness to it à la ...TRAIL OF DEAD when they were good (aka around *Source Tags and Codes*). I'll have to save my full hate rant for the next band that has a verbose silly promo sheet but can't actually back it up, because STATIC IS A CITY have held their ground. (DV)
(Ideas)

STICKERS – "Swollen" LP

I know these people. I knew all the lyrics were about fucking but I thought it was all of the singer's sex experiences. In reality it's fantasy and perv stories, (I'm pretty sure she hasn't fucked Bon Jovi). A dirty limerick or a web woven of sex with Nikola Tesla amongst all of his inventions. The lyrics range from childish rhymes to lines that were pretty intense (there is a lyric sheet). Sonically, it comes across as the VANISHING with less wild skronk. Everything seems pretty controlled and polished here. The riffs get real wild but nothing devolves into chaos. The guitar is thin and high, sometimes jagged and sometimes sloppy melodies. The bass and drums don't fuck about—they are too busy carrying everything around. There is a true freak in a huge t-shirt with eye covering bangs singing low and breaking. Together it's like a cracking industrial machine scrapage but not like thick-soled shoes and jerky dancing, just mechanical. If it was faster it would be skronked but everything is slowed down in a stretch but not a sludge. I keep wanting the songs to be slightly faster but they aren't supposed to be and this upholds a weird tension. It's one of those records that would be an excellent 7" but instead the majority of songs clock in around the four-minute mark and there are thirteen of them. It's like there are three songs and they are so good, but then they wrote and recorded them all four more times. (MM)
(End of Time)

STRUGGLING HARSH IMMORTALS – "Theme" EP

One of the most glorious aspects of nascent Japanese hardcore and punk was its "anything goes" new frontier of radical combination of sound; ADK, AA Records, and even Selfish or Dogma never really had a consistent sound. Though those labels' output constructs the basic ideas of what to expect of Japanese hardcore, at their best the unpredictability and innovative combinations in the bands' musical ideas was their strength. This three-song debut from S.H.I. (STRUGGLING HARSH IMMORTALS)—an Osaka "supergroup" with the singer of ZOUO, drummer of the STALIN, guitarists from both NASHI and DANSE MACABRE, samples from a member of OFFMASK 00, bassist from the RUDE BOYS and another scene veteran from GEWALT—could easily rest on a laurels of a route repeat of hardcore. Instead, it creatively delves back to that period where combining sturdy mid tempo rock and psychedelic influences with punk, adding a Theremin or some underlying audio samples, and then capping it with absolutely caustic vocal barking made complete sense...or at least reaches a totality of unique vision that few try for. While minimally packaged, this fantastic debut instantly commands captivating, repeat listens! (KS)
(Crust War, no info)

SUFFER THE PAIN – "Face of Doom" EP

This Swedish band plays pretty straightforward blackened crust with a thrash edge. Five song EP with a cover of MOTÖRHEAD's "Killed by Death" done in the band's own style which is ten times cooler than just playing it like the original. This record is like the soundtrack to your late night after-party with all your friends who drink a lot, listen to BOLT THROWER and have too many dogs with bandanas around their necks. (AP)
(Phobia)

TANGO VIOLENZO – "The Submission" EP

TANGO VIOLENZO offer a decidedly stylized record here, opting for the intense, melodic discord of late era American emo on this four song release. Fusing tone and style from noteworthy acts like ORCHID and the BLOOD BROTHERS, the resulting EP is a disappointing venture into charted territory. Less chaotic on record than the band is straining for and not enticing enough to enjoy start to finish. Ultimately, the tracks fall short on many fronts with no single issue to tackle. An uncanny resemblance to EX-IGNOTA on a few cuts did brighten my day, but all in all a real dud. (RM)
(Luftslott)

TESTORS – "Complete Recordings 1976 – 1979" 2xLP

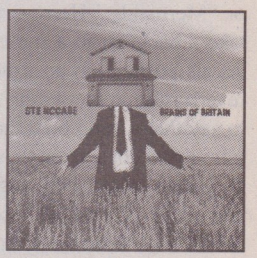
Ya just don't see the Incognito, Rave-up and Swami reissue jobs around much anymore, so Alien Snatch has taken up the slack and made this classic NYC punk available for the masses to marvel at yet again. The quick sell is that this is all canonical shit at this point: "Let's Get Zooed Out," "Sick On Yesterday," "Primitive"...fuckin' hell, unbeatable. Nearly 40 tunes, none of 'em duds. If you don't already have this stuff, you truly need it now. (MC)
(Alien Snatch)

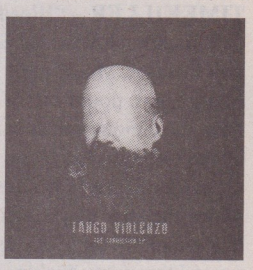
THEE TEE PEES – LP

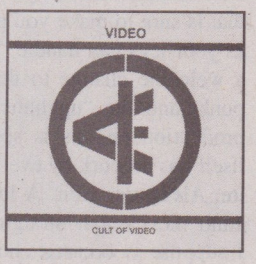
Straight brash propelling '60s garage punk sound with surf rock tinges, and all hell-out on the farfisa, whip this thing into a frothy hot mess. Lots of shitty guitar solos and wild man howling up the sleaze factor. Side B's got a gnarly cover of the CRIME song "Frustration," and "She Don't Want you Anymore" will make you want to smash your head against the wall in glee. Not sure about the thematic cultural misappropriation of Native Americans, with songs titled "Pow Wow" and "Indian Bingo." However, there's also a song called "Chicken Neck" with the chorus "Chicken neck / Chicken beak / Chicken necks is all I eat." It's obviously all tongue-in-cheek, I just don't think it's that clever. Irreverent, trashy and brazen, it's clear that THEE TEE PEES DGAF and just want to party. (CR)
(Manglor)

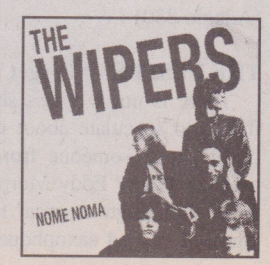
THUNDERS – "Weird Spines White Trash Whatever" LP

Every now and again, something about a recording, be it the playing, singing, or even the recording itself, jumps out at a listener and takes up all of their brainspace. On the second track of this lengthily titled LP, the singer does something to remind me very strongly of the COLD WAR KIDS big hit from a few years ago, and now it's almost all I can think of when I listen to the rest of the record. That's totally unfair to put in print,









because I have no idea what the COLD WAR KIDS sound like outside their one hit that I don't even know the name of, but, like the father of our country, George Washington, I cannot tell a lie. *Weird Spines White Trash Whatever* is pretty much a straightforward rock record, perhaps in the same lineage as MILK MUSIC, mixed with heavy reverb garage rock. It's pretty over the top, but not in a groundbreaking way. The more messy moments are where the rubber meets the road, like "Song for Leslie Feist (Who I've Never Met)" or "Mermaids." Here, structure and convention take a backseat to a sense of abandon. Still, the vocals, pushed way up in the mix and dripping with reverb rub me the wrong way. It may seem odd to say that a band both has to rein in and let go, but in this context that's what I'm going to say. Disparate styles, extravagance, a touch of ego, and a lack of a palpable sense of angst hold this record back from being a good fun listen. (LP)
(Maximum Pelt)

TIMEKILLER – "Bleed Out" EP

I fucking love this! Super blown-out fuck-you metallic Motör-punk cranked up to eleven. Energy just pours off of this record in waves, from the vicious vocals to the caveman pounding of the D-beats. In classic style, even the slower parts seem speedy because of the urgency with which they are played. Holy fuck, when the first lick kicked in on "Sinking in Shit," I almost got up and threw my fucking chair across the room. This is the unholy spawn of INEPSY and G-ZET unleashed on a studio with DESTINO FINAL's recording philosophy. Member(s?) of SPEED KILLS and it fucking shows. These Brazilian ragers have captured something fucking special on this record. A total must have! (AU)
(self-released)

TØRSÖ – "Community Psychosis" EP

A D-beat "supergroup," if you will, comprised of members of: PUNCH, HOLY, NEO CONS and RITUAL CONTROL. TØRSÖ play a no-compromise, in your face style of D-beat that is sure to make you pedal your bike as fast as your legs can handle. The female vocals are a welcome change to this particular brand of punk, and the "ugghhhs" pack a punch. The production on this is spotless and the record itself has artwork by everybody's current favorite, Alexander Heir. A lot of people label this band as, "vegan straightedge D-beat" which I suppose is accurate, however they are much more than that. Give 'em and listen and see. (KC)
(Adagio 830)

THE ULSERS – "Forget Them" LP

There is not a "press sheet" on this, so I'm forced to speculate about its origins. First (and only) guess; someone from UV RACE pulled a David West / Eddy Murphy and decided they were #comingtoamerica to join forces with whoever played saxophone on the UZI RASH records. While jamming in the States they were invigorated by seeing the URINALS play Stranded Records in Oakland and decided that the minimal jangle thud of the URINALS not only opened up their heart chakras, but deeply rattled the cores of their being. They then took a time machine back to Australia circa 1981 and taught these songs to criminal elements who also happened to be musical visionaries. Those songs were recorded and then brought back to the future to be mastered by the capable and high yielding hands of Mikey Young. This (terminally) super sick platter of vibez is what resulted. (P$)
(Wallaby Beat)

THE ULSERS – "Remember Them" EP

The Antipodean DIY archeologists over at Wallaby Beat have unearthed an obscure gem with this reissue of a tiny-pressing private-label release. The ULSERS appear to have been an ad hoc shambolic bedsit improv unit, bashing away on an acoustic guitar, sax, harmonica, and cardboard boxes for drums. The vocals stutter and bluster over the top like the rantings of a corner shop wino. To be fair, there's a limited audience for this kind of thing but now at least that audience might actually get to hear it! (AM)
(Wallaby Beat)

UNA BÉSTIA INCONTROLABLE – "Nou Món/Cinturons, Genolls, Vidres I Cossos"

Catalunya beasts UBI are alchemists. They have connected to the higher powers, battled the negative forces within them and extracted the essence. This 45 finds them elevating to an almost transcendental sonic state and they take you with them on this gripping ride. The ominous beat of the drums feels predatory, making your heartbeat faster. The possessed bass buzzes and makes your limbs throb, the sublime, dark guitar plunges everything into darkness. The metal-gauntlet-heavy riffs and malicious hooks are storming your head like ghosts; the spine-chilling solos and electrified chord-scratching slowly carving through your skin like cut glass. All the while, the maddened vocals have you by the neck and are dragging you along, deeper into their nightmare. A bass-break rumbles like thunder on Side B and for a moment your mortal woes are extinguished, your daemons exorcized. Then everything hurtles off the edge of the imaginary cliff, but you don't care—you have been enlightened. (LA)
(Iron Lung)

UNIVERSE PEOPLE – "Are Coming to the Dance" LP

Usually it goes the other way but the more I listen to this album the less I like it. Moody post-punk is usually my bread, butter, jam and jelly, which may explain my descending enjoyment. One of my main issues is that the album is quite inconsistent and overly formulaic. All of the songs have a very similar feel in a way that drags, and the vocals are, honestly, fairly annoying. The opening track "Loves Like A Man" has a really memorable guitar and bass melody but the chorus is just the two singers saying, "He fights like a girl but he loves like a man, whoa whoa whoa" which is, frankly, a trite stupid lyric. Especially given how many times the line is repeated, I can't help but feel that the vocals were thrown in after the songwriting and done so with a bit too much indiscretion. This song epitomizes the lack of song development that keeps them from growing on you. The second track "The Modern Girl" is similarly cliché in the lyrics department, but has really solid instrumentation, again, as is their trend throughout the album. The sound has a very late era SLEATER-KINNEY vibe, which is really welcoming, with a solid recording job and great tone on the instruments. There are some tracks I did really enjoy in total, such as "Chemistry" and the haunting final cut "Spark In Your Eyes," but on the whole this is not my glass of Seattle rainwater. (DV)
(Dragnet)

VÅLDSAMT MOTSTÅND – "Gamla Goda Värderingar" EP

Swedish crust that bounces between death metal-infused chugging and driving D-beat, complemented at times by an odd sense of melody. The first song opens up with the death metal equivalent of a cheat beat, but gets more bearable once the tempo kicks up, and the more hardcore songs in the middle of the record are quite solid if you appreciate epic vibes in this style. Unfortunately, the band slows down again for the plodding "Snake People," which has sick lyrics ("there will be no burial for you in the lotus garden") but no real drive, ultimately resolving into a mega-breakdown that's about three sizes too tuff for me. The two halves of their sound, which are never satisfyingly integrated, make this feel like a band trying to pull from a smattering of influences, but still finding its own voice(s). (WB)
(Högre Tempo!)

VEUVE SS – "O.P.L.T. & O.S.C." EP

This is an interesting release from the experimental side of hardcore, showcasing conceptual aggression and paranoia only few can document well. A wave of repetition and anxiety washed over me, bringing to mind elements of black metal that are less pronounced than a DEAFHEAVEN record subtle, mostly due to their obvious allegiance to hardcore and attention to Youth Attack releases. What really separates VEUVE SS from the pack is their interest in noisy interludes that are reminiscent of NO STATIK in that they take on part of their identity almost as much as the instrumental compositions. They are exaggerated and ominous, yes, but all is fittingly cathartic and in step with the project's vision. Not unlike the totality HOAX offered on their releases, this French outfit really nailed it on this one. With a white on white on white packaging presentation, this stunning aes-

thetic is complete with screened cover, sealed and marked spindle hole, and an almost intimate closure on the letter fold cover. Outstanding. (RM)
(Adagio830 / Echo Canyon / Flower of Carnage)

VIDEO – "Cult of Video/City of Hate"

TV's Daniel is the best current vocalist in punk, the absolute master of the audible sneer, and somehow he gets even nastier as the A-Side of this excellent 45 goes on. Four-on-the-floor and a hypnotic, syncopated two-note bass line propel his screed before a full band freakout. "Long live the new faith." Yessir. I'm not really one for cults (or doing what men tell me to do) but I'd follow him and the rest of this band wherever they want me to go—where do I sign up? The B-Side is also great but I keep flipping the record back to the start. Top-notch Texan hatewave that I'm absolutely dying to see played live. (GA)
(No Good)

SONNY VINCENT & SPITE – "Spiteful" CD

A full-length from New York punk and rock'n'roll legend Sonny Vincent of TESTORS fame backed by a punk supergroup consisting of drummer Rat Scabies of the DAMNED, bassist Glen Matlock of the SEX PISTOLS and the RICH KIDS, and sax player Steve MacKay of the STOOGES. Although this was recorded with one band member at a time in Europe, it has a good rockin' band vibe especially with the great Rat Scabies behind the kit. This is mostly rockers with sax adding to the old school feel but there are some slow and mid tempo numbers here too. It's good to hear these rock legends can still rock it like the old days. Pretty damn cool. (RL)
(Ultramafic)

VIOLENT CHANGE – "Celebration of Taste" LP

Fantastic slither down the DIY bedroom ether wormhole of punk experimentation, invoking something between Xpressway Records and the MANCHESTER MUSICIANS COLLECTIVE... The A-Side starts out strong, demonstrating that VIOLENT CHANGE can write pop songs that are both hazy and vicious, though this showing is not as savage as the live experience. When performing shows VC is a group, but on record they are a mostly one-man bedroom production. Their last LP had a couple of full band jammers, but this abandons that tactic totally, and as the record progresses the songs seem to drift in and out of consciousness, sort of coming across as an attempt by the DEAD C to play SKIP SPENCE's *Oar*. Makes for a weird Siltbreeze and Brit-psychesploitation garble that is somehow comforting—for some reason it made good background music. I am not sure this is going to be anyone's favorite record (I could be wrong of course) but it's ultimately a really satisfying listen. I could see how fans of watching this band play might feel cheated by this LP. To them I say, start your own group! (LG)
(Melters)

TIMMY VULGAR – "The Best" 45

Timbo Vulgar, today's finest purveyor of intergalactic reptile punk, has gone (gasp!) acoustic folk-rock! Captured in a tender moment during what I'm sure was a fine party night, Timmy and a couple of drunken cohorts free associate abuncha nonsense into someone's "home studio" (could this be a cellphone recording?), toss-off DIY style. We're now doomed to ponder the meaning of this ramble for the rest of our days. If nothing else, the bullshit heard here is a pure secretion from the mind of a punk genius, all at once trashy, scary, eerily poignant and goddamn funny. Casual HUMAN EYE or CLONE DEFECTS fans should steer clear and continue to live their dreary lives unpolluted by this…but devotees simply need this. Epic Jimbo Easter drawing adorns the sleeve too. Color me obsessed. (MC)
(Terror Trash, no info)

WEAK LINK – "Original Position" EP

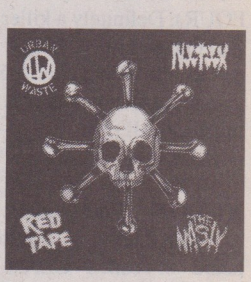
This is their second EP and my introduction to Newfoundland's answer to hardcore in 2014! WEAK LINK push past the stompy, aggro trend while keeping themselves in the conversation of today's top rockers. This crew of sober Canadians would fit nicely on a bill with VIOLENT REACTION, GLUE, or CREEM. Replace the close shave of today's heroes with the abandon of millennial TEAR IT UP and you've got some hard fucking punk. This is a certified ripper. (RM)
(Weak Link)

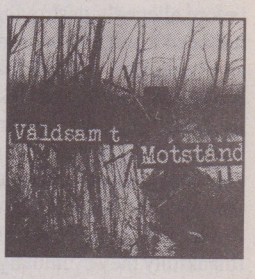
JAMES WILLIAMSON – "Re-Licked" CD

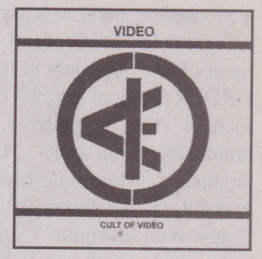
This is JAMES WILLIAMSON who joined the STOOGES in the '70s playing songs he wrote with IGGY POP post *Raw Power* as well as two that he didn't write, but presumably played on. Strangely, the thing that jumped out at me on first glance was written underneath the large "Produced by James Williamson" on the back of the case. It says, "All tracks owned and performed by James Williamson." I thought it was some weird disclaimer to let us all know he owned these songs so he has a right to play them. Good for him, I thought. However, I think he means he owns these recordings, which seems really unnecessary to state on a CD jacket. The music was recorded by the 2014 touring version of the STOOGES: Williamson, MIKE WATT, STEVE MACKAY and TOBY DAMMIT. The vocals are done by an odd assortment of singers starting out with JELLO BIAFRA doing a fairly good IGGY impersonation. Also appearing are Gary Floyd, Alison Mosshart (DISCOUNT/THE KILLS), Mark Lanegan (SCREAMING TREES), Lisa Kekaula (the BELLRAYS), J.G. Thirlwell (FOETUS), Bobby Gillespie (PRIMAL SCREAM), Nicke Andersson (HELLACOPTERS) and more. It is an eclectic collection of guests, but the enjoyment level goes up and down as most of the singers get too bluesy sounding. Have they not heard the IGGY versions? It was interesting hearing this CD, but I have a hard time believing anyone would want to own this. (CK)
(Leopard Lady)

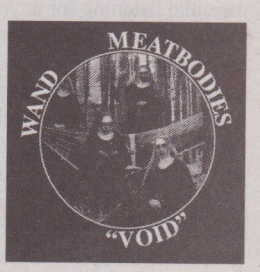
THE WIPERS – "Nome Noma/Bowery Boy"

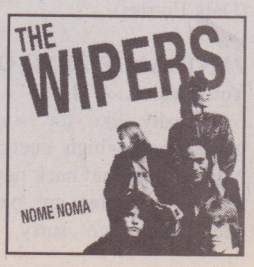
Super sick Québécois punker from 1981, which somehow sounds like it could be on a KBD comp or in a jeans ad at the same time? I mean it's got that "Ça Plane Pour Moi" almost mainstream power pop attack, but it's also got the dirt and snot of a REMO VOOR / LOST KIDS 45… I guess they formed just after the peak of punk, but were too "hardcore" for Montreal rock radio, so they released this and dissipated. Relentlessly appealing sick riffs for sick minds! I have played "Nome Noma" on repeat for the past fifteen minutes and I can't stop, it's just catchier than a cold sore! Apparently Celine Dion likes this 45; buy one for yourself, your parents, and your pets. You won't be able to stop listening to it, a mix tape killer! (LG)
(Meanbean)











XETAS – "The Silence/The Knife"

Riffy and catchy as hell right-now punk trio from Austin. Very rippin' rhythmic blend of early '90s AmRep and Trance label bands, like JANITOR JOE and fellow Texans JOHNBOY on the A-side. Although, "The Silence" has more of a focus on dual vocal harmony parts. The flipside is direct, speedy and melodic punk that continues the dual vocal thing and great guitar melodies and bass tone (and oddly reminds me of DILLINGER FOUR). Definitely a killer band who I'm sure are fucking great live. Bonus that their promo sheet talked shit about Little Stephen and his faux-garage almost as much as it did telling me about this band. (JD)
(12XU)

XYMOX – "Subsequent Pleasures" 12"

Later known as a little band you may have heard of called CLAN OF XYMOX, these darkwave trailblazers originally released 500 copies of this 12" in 1983 as plain ol' XYMOX, before allegedly destroying most of the copies. It has been a sought after (and prohibitively expensive!) record ever since. Dark Entries adds to their impressive list of reissues, bringing it back into print on vinyl for the first time in over thirty years. In many ways, it still feels like a draft: the arrangements are spare, almost every song inexplicably fades out, and the band can't quite decide if they want to rely on synths or guitars (thankfully they eventually realized that you don't have to choose!). This unfinished state is what makes this record so exciting: you get a sense of a pioneering band at a crossroads, a group figuring out its identity (and how to use its equipment). In obvious debt to JOY DIVISION / NEW ORDER (particularly PETER HOOK), highlights include the propulsive, interminable, and eminently danceable "Going Round," the anguished "Muscovite Mosquito" (which would make it on to a future LP as the more complete "Muscoviet Mosquito"), and Anke Wolbert's turn on multi-layered vocals-as-instrument in "Call It Weird" (it's definitely weird). This record is essential listening for anyone interested in taking a look at the origins of darkwave and synth pop and for fans of the '80s 4AD roster. Comes in a beautiful silkscreened jacket with a two color poster insert detailing the painstaking (and wholly DIY) processes that went into the production of the original 12", including the design, process of gathering equipment, and recording. A fabulous look at an early work by a band that would provide a blueprint for so many, made before there were multiple examples of their own to follow. (GA)
(Dark Entries)

ZENTRALHEIZUNG OF DEATH – "Would You Rather…?" LP

I really like the sound of this. German garage rock—high energy and really rockin'. None of that laid back nouveau garage for these kids. The drums are bashed out, the guitars occasionally go surfy, and the vocals are insistent. This is catchy and manic. I love it. However, I kind of wish I didn't look up the German translation of ZENTRALHEIZUNG. Although, I probably would have eventually figured out by saying it out loud a few times. (CK)
(Alien Snatch)

V/A – URBAN WASTE / NOTOX / THE NASTY / RED TAPE – four way split EP

URBAN WASTE made me smile with their late '80s hardcore sound. Everything about this is what I loved back then. Prominent bass, vocals you can understand, sing along anthems, and political/social lyrics. '80s West Coast skater hardcore. Yeah I said it, '80s West Coast. URBAN WASTE essentially put out one record around '82 and are from NYC, but they didn't have that NYC or East Coast hardcore sound. Nice. NOTOX doesn't venture far from the sound of URBAN WASTE, except it's got more of a modern sound and is a bit noisier, but all I said to describe URBAN WASTE applies to NOTOX. The NASTY do have a nasty (in a good way) sound. In your face hardcore that wastes no time messing around. The type of band where you instantly feel like someone is screaming at you. I think their opening lines from "My Name Is Fuck Off" gives you a good idea. "Preach to me you slave. Give me purpose you pawn. I hate absolutely everyone." RED TAPE also takes us back to the mid-'80s and has a slightly cleaner sound than URBAN WASTE. Catchy sing-along hardcore with spoken/sung vocals all while remaining pissed. Oddly their track "Nocturnal Depression" has the first wave emo sound of the '80s. Yup, a CHARLES BRONSON cover. This is an excellent comp. (MH)
(Pine Hill)

V/A – "Bitter Cold" EP

Fukkn excellent collection of punishment from the Midwest. SICK/TIRED, LIFES, MELLOW HARSHER, SEA OF SHIT, MILORGANAUT, MACHISMO, GNAWED, and SCAPHE dish out noise-drenched powerviolence, blasting downtuned hardcore, and general brutality. This is one to shove in the face of people who say that seven inch comps suck, because *Bitter Cold* is really good. (WN)
(Diseased Audio)

V/A – "Distorted Minds in A Sick World" LP

An impressively destructive four way split of raw to medium rare D-beat, centered around, but not exclusively, the Czech Republic with a few international band members thrown in for good measure. A completely raging comp, the cover features a black and white collage of Josef Stalin, some German soldiers from a war 70 years ago, Vladmir Lenin, a grim reaper, a large fruit bat, barbed wire, knives and skulls. It looks cool and I assume is a stand against totalitarianism, but it's the sick world of the past, not the present. I wish there was vibrant art, defiant against and coloring the definition of the ails of now not largely settled history. Maybe in Eastern Europe you encounter enough sympathizers and apologists for the pogroms of WW2 and Soviet rule that it makes more sense. The comp itself however is a rampage, with four tracks from Czech's FEAR OF EXINCTION hammering tough precision D-beat with tight drumming, layered guitar snarl and growling screams in a clean and clearly defined recording. FINAL SLUM WAR are noisy cheese-grater guitar distortion over ram shackle D-beat and hollowed out wailing vocals and bent guitar solos, a noised out riff fest with lyrics in Portuguese. KRUGER blast five fast, solid, ripping tracks of focused Dis-riffing, with dual vocal upchuck of growling and slathering shouts. HUNGARY's DISKOBRA, now a three piece, round out the comp with seven curt and rampaging blasts of compressed, taut D-beat hardcore with hard vocals scowling over the top. Lyrics of all the bands are mostly in Czech with no translation except for FEAR OF EXTINCTION, who rip environmental destruction, politicians and wasting your life in clipped DISCHARGE Haiku. D-beat maniacs—get this now!! (KS)
(Deviance, no info / Dzsukhell / Permaculture / Phobia / Sick Company / Vahn Frita, no info / Wolf Drunk)

V/A – "Sounds Of Sodium" CD

Very frustratingly, this CD comes with no information whatsoever. Well, it has a track listing. And that's that. The full title, as per the back of the CD, says "Pariah Music Club Presents Sounds Of Sodium, Salt Lake City, 2014", so with my devilishly Sherlockian powers of deduction, I reckon it's a contemporary compilation of SLC sounds. Twenty-two tracks. The gamut of contemporary (and not so contemporary) punk styles, from yer basic speedy hardcore to grubby thrash, and metal stuff. Standouts for this humble reviewer were the excellent muscular power-pop stylings of DECIBEL TRUST and DIE MONSTER DIE's excellent reinterpretation of the spirit and sound of the DEAD BOYS. Like all area comps, this is a bit hit or miss, but nevertheless, a worthy enough snapshot of what Mormon underwear sounds like these days. (RK)
(no info)

V/A – "ZXC MUSIK" LP

This is a mix of "Finno-Swedish punk" bands, mostly previously unreleased, and varying from bands active almost 20 years ago to bands from the present. This is a pretty weird fucking mix, man. From MARILYN MANSON wannabes, to attempts at street punk, and a whole helluva lot of unexpected keyboards and digital drums, this fifteen-track train wreck does have some killer standouts. Bands like SVEN TUBA OCH FISKMASARNA, KPHC, and HEARTBREAK STEREO make this a worthwhile listen, with some great street punk and hardcore, but the bulk of it seemed a little too cheezy for my taste. (DZ)
(ZXC)

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A World We Never Made: aworldwenevermade.bandcamp.com
Acid Redux: acidreduxproductions.com
Adagio 830: adagio830.de
Alien Snatch: Rodenbergstr. 31, 10439, Berlin, GERMANY, aliensnatch.com
AM Records: facebook.com/AMVinylRecorsd
Anarchotic: anarchoticrecords.bandcamp.com
Artcore: artcorefanzine.co.uk
Bachelor: bachelorrecords.com
Be Fast Records: 48 cours Gambetta, 34 000 Montpellier, FRANCE
Blackball: blackballrecords.com
Castle Face: castlefacerecords.com
The Cats: thecatsusa.bandcamp.com
Certified PR: certifiedprrecords.com
Charmstrong: thebigforgive.com
Combat Rock Industry: Vaasankatu 7, 00500 Helsinki, FINLAND, fireinsidemusic.com
Croque Macadam: croquemacadam.com
Crowd Control Media: crowdcontrolmedia.net
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Dirt Fi: raptusdifolliardf.bandcamp.com
Diseased Audio: diseasedaudio.blogspot.com
Don Giovanni: dongiovannirecords.com
Dragnet: dragnetrecords.wordpress.com
Dusty Medical: PO Box 1981, Milwaukee, WI 53201, dustymedical.com
Dzsukhell: dzsukhellrekords.blogspot.com
Echo Canyon Records: 8 rue Jaboulay, 69007, Lyon, FRANCE, echocanyonrecords.com
End of Time: endoftimerecords.com
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The Escapist: sauli.okker@gmail.com
Eunuch Records: eunuchrecords.storenvy.com
Even Worse: evenworserecords.com
Fear of Extinction: fearofextinction.bandcamp.com
Feel It: feelitrecords.bigcartel.com, feelitrecords.blogspot.com
Flesh Bug: Felix Piede Singerstr. 52, 10243, Berlin, GERMANY, info@fleshbug.com
Flower of Carnage Records: 2-4 Takamidai Kokurakita Kitak Yushu Fukuoka 803-0838 JAPAN
GRF: grfrecords.estranky.cz
Guerilla: limogespunx.com
Headnoise: headnoisedistrorecords.blogspot.com
Helta Skelta: heltaskeltarecords.blogspot.com
Hockey Dad: #2-823 Victoria Dr., Vancouver, BC,V5L 4E8,CANADA,hockeydadrecords.com
Högre Tempo!: v.motstand@gmail.com
Honest for Truth: honestfortruthrecords.tumblr.com
Howlin' Banana: howlinbananarecords.com
Ideas: hearIDEAS.com
In The Red: PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, intheredrecords.com
Insane Society: insanesociety.net
Iron Column: ironcolumnrecords.com
Iron Lung: PO Box 95521, Seattle, WA 98145, lifeironlungdeath.blogspot.com
Jobsworth: jobsworthrecords.com
Kappa: kapparecords.com
Katorga Works: katorgaworks.bigcartel.com
Leopard Lady: straightjameswilliamson.com
The Lickers: thelickersband.com
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Terror Night Recordings: nightterrorrecordings.com
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To Live A Lie: c/o Will Butler, 2825 Van Dyke Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27607-7021, tolivealie.com
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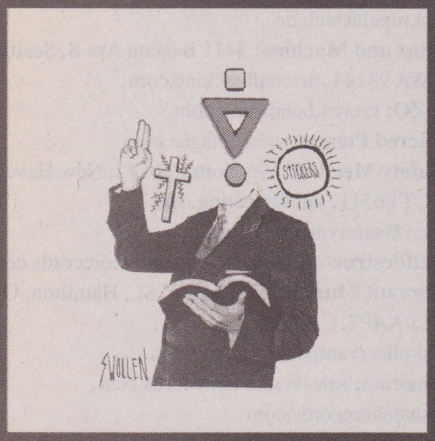

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A DISCO FOR FERNS – *Your Distant Aunt* – More rudimentary bare bones basement punk from Tyler, Texas. A DISCO FOR FERNS and the whole 8UP! crew have been cranking out consistently mediocre music and I'm happy to see these monkeys dropping by the demo section again after what feels like a long absence. I sound like I am slamming them (once again?) but these four songs are, in fact, hopelessly mediocre 1-2-1-2 melodic punk, the recording is pretty shit, the vocals are lazy, and the whole thing is utterly forgettable. *And they don't care!* They are going to keep cranking this shit out *because they want to* no matter what anyone else thinks, and that probably makes them punker than me or anyone reading this. Don't listen to bullshit from me or anyone else, you fukks—don't quit, and keep those CD-Rs coming!! (Robert) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, $3 ppd c/o Evans, 323 Chimney Rock #914, Tyler, TX 75703)

ACCENT GRAVE – I was initially excited to pull this out of the bin simply because it's from Luxembourg, a place that gave us PETROGRAD, the only band I can think of from this tiny country squished between Belgium, Germany, and France. Lyrics are in English and are clever, introspective, and a bit poetic. The style is very melodic and pop-oriented, with strong elements of '90s pop-punk production à la Fat Wreck and the like—closer to FACE TO FACE than NOFX. Melodies are mostly provided by way of octave chords and vocal harmonies, and some of the better moments recall BAD RELIGION. Though it's not a sound that I would choose, ACCENT GRAVE presents some well-written and expertly executed songs here without any pretension. (Matt) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, 40 rue Kirchberg, L-4612 Niederkorn, Luxemborg, acccentgrave@yahoo.de)

ACCENT GRAVE – Melodic punk with overly crooning vocals that distract from what are actually pretty good songs in the Fat Wreck vein. This is perhaps a little sweeter than some of you might like, but a hook is a hook and, even though the vocals aren't my thing, I find these tracks fairly endearing. The shit has no edge whatsoever, but it's not bad at all. (Robert) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, 40 rue Kirchberg, L-4612 Niederkorn, Luxemborg, acccentgrave@yahoo.de)

ALL BLOOD – *The Kids Have No Taste* – This is what I want my garage punk to sound like! Catchy psyched out '60s mayhem all full of drugs and distortion. The kind of shit you *could* tone down and stick within the framework of a killer tune, but who the fukk would want to do that?!? Losers and dummies, and not ALL BLOOD, that's who. "Hippie Drugs," "Another Teen Beat," "Now I Am The Devil," and a crucial organ and a mix that dances from subtle bizarro almost KBD jams ("Opt Out") to PCP laced bubblegum pop ("Queen Twerp"). I suggest you expand your comfort zone and settle in. (Robert) (15-song cassette, lyrics not included, allblood.bandcamp.com)

ANONYMOUSE – Punk from Oregon with a very up-front anarchist stance. There are no lyrics in the layout, but the slogans, images, and stencil lettering paired with their clearly articulate vocals make their anarchist and anti-authoritarian stances obvious. Mickey Mouse wearing an Anonymous mask and holding a wrench—duh. Musically, it's straight-ahead punk rock with a bit of forced snot in the vocals. Unfortunately, this is one of the worst recorded and mixed new things I've heard in a while. Everything is so separated and the tones and sounds are so weird. The songwriting is not bad (and I'm definitely on their ideological team), but this just sounds so square to me. (Matt) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, anonymouseband.bandcamp.com)

ANOPHELI – *A Hunger Rarely Sated* – Dual vocal galloping neocrust with leads and melodies courtesy of cello instead of guitar. "Epic" would be an accurate descriptor for this determined and forceful music that churns as much as it rages, which should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with the band's lineage (FALL OF EFRAFA, MONUMENTS COLLAPSE, NEO CONS, countless others). Heavy in virtually every sense of the word, and very good, this is the cassette version of the Euro LP released by Alerta Antifascista. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, anopheli.bandcamp.com)

THE ANTIDON'TS – This style of punk isn't my thing, but it's done really well and it's a great release. Maybe if it was still 20 years ago, this would be referred to as "mall punk"…in that way where it's fun, goofy and possibly influenced by Epitaph. There are nasally vocals, tight riffs, good drumming, energetic deliveries and some hints of surf here and there. Best line: "Come on vacation, leave on probation!" (Greg) (13-song CD-R, lyrics not included, theantidonts@gmail.com)

APPARITIONS – These dudes do a pretty good job of making sludgy dirges sound like anything but. They throw some math weirdness in the mix, which is part of it, but presentation masks the delivery mechanism and it was halfway through the second number (the expertly titled "It's Not Folk, It's Fuck") before I realized that these songs could easily be repackaged as something more digestible (and therefore less unique). It's like heavy basement emo doom. Good job keeping me on my toes, kids. I dig it. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, mathews.ryan328@gmail.com, apparitionsbi.bandcamp.com)

ARUGULA – This is hardcore punk, but there's something else going on here, too—maybe a touch of garage? Mid-paced with rough-edged time changes, ARUGULA brings to mind SACCHARINE TRUST plus SSD, while presumably intending to sound like neither of those bands. The recording on this tape has a really minimal feel; raw without sacrificing the low-end. The lyrics stand out here, with one song ostensibly about applying to a police academy and, thankfully, regretting it. Looking forward to what comes next. Members of SIN ORDEN and DISTRACT. (Shit) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, 2515 N. Kildare, Chicago, IL 60639)

B-LINES – Snotty and energetic garage tinged punk with hints of UK post-punks whispering in the ear of sloshed Midwestern punkers to hone their attack. This is pure "no rules" early punk energy, and it doesn't sound calculated, even when listening with perspective—it just fukkn burns. High manic vox, clean guitars, and a walloping erratic drummer pounding the shit out of whatever beat they throw at him. Killer. (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, c/o Shake! Records, experienceshake.com)

BLUNT FORCE – Starting your tape with a hard driving punk number with throaty leads and a backing vocal filled chorus is a good idea. Following that with a breakdown that serves as an invitation to mosh is also a good idea. Apparently this band sounds sorta like SLAPSHOT, but I've never actually listened to SLAPSHOT so I can't say if that's a true statement. But if SLAPSHOT sounds like BLUNT FORCE, then SLAPSHOT is probably a pretty good band. But BLUNT FORCE is probably better. (Robert) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, bleedingedges.bigcartel.com)

BURNERS – *Adults* – If I could imagine melodic NOFX-esque punk reincarnated as an adrenalinated region rock animal that I found pleasant to listen to, then it would sound like BURNERS. Guitarist has a seriously lethal right hand, and there are lyrics like: "No one cares, this band sucks / Don't know why we still play this shit / I don't wanna ever wake up again / I have no clue why I'm so jaded." It's cool, bro, your band is really good at doing the thing you do, and it's rare that I say I think a band is *too* fast, so good job. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, muckmanrecords.bandcamp.com)

COLLUSION – *Demo 2014* – Yet another solid demo released by Flophouse, COLLUSION from DC remind me of the early 2000s when bands were revisiting the straightforward sounds of the first wave of hardcore but bringing it to the present with a post-youth crew sensibility. No frills here, just five tracks of frustrated vocals and riffs with occasional bouts of knuckle-dragging right when you want them. (Shit) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, c/o Flophouse Tapes, 1326 Newton St. NE, Washington, DC 20017)

COSMIC NEUROSE / ULTIMO RAUSEA – *Nippon Split Cassette Attack 3* – Tokyo's COSMIC NEUROSE are one of the coolest Japanese bands I've ever seen and it seems that they have ingested a steady diet of high energy rock'n'roll since that show in 2009. Feisty blown-out driving punk with an infectious chorus, nothing fancy (except the solo) but the fire is burning bright. ULTIMO RAUSEA have been kicking for 25+ years and their

attack hasn't lost an ounce of power—straight to the throat rudimentary hardcore punk without any attempt to polish or perfect. This band seems to fly exclusively under the radar, but they continuously crank out some of the most honest punk that visits my cassette deck. (Robert) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, c/o Takashi Yamazaki, 101 Maruyoshi sou, 113 Waridashi Machi, Kanazawa-City Ishikawa, 920-0062 Japan)

CRIMSON SCARLET – *Athens Cave Sessions* – Who says death rock is contrived? One can only dig so deep into the grave. Space is dark, and that is where this cassette goes. Goth ups, not downs—this is their most club night offering yet. CRIMSON SCARLET return with a refined sound that rides a wave from punk into ULTRAVOX or CLAN OF XYMOX territory. This is moving stuff to move to. Synths abound, alongside sliding space guitars and some of the catchiest ANOK bass lines I've heard in a while. The kind of bass line that makes you bob your head back and forth involuntarily as that part comes around and around, discordant movements. The last track is a howling up tempo cover of JOY DIVISION's "Interzone" with some very neat cathedral bell effects and ensemble vocals. There are only 200 of these, so get on it, if even possible. (Jason) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, PO Box 30391, Oakland, CA, crimsonscarletsb@gmail.com)

CRIPPLED FOX/XSAXONX– *split* – All of my least favorite parts of hardcore can be found on this tape. The cover has a buff fox and a buff cat arm wrestling, which is telling of what's to come. Both bands are having a contest on who can write the shortest songs, scream the most and play the fastest. Who wins at the jerk off contest? No one. If you're a fan of either band or dogpiling at shows, here's your new favorite tape. (Vanessa) (13-song cassette, lyrics included, xsaxonx.bandcamp.com, crippledfoxhc@yahoo.com, x4298x@gmail.com)

D BERRY ROOTH – Some dude calling himself a "scum rocker" wrote some rape fantasy bullshit and "shocking" songs about porn using a guitar and drum machine. This shit is budget as fuck. I know some real scum rockers and they'd probably make fun of this guy until he cried… and then write better songs. No heart. No interest. He even sounds bored when singing about how "tranny porn" makes his cock rock hard. (Greg) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, facebook.com/dberryrooth)

DAKHMA–After an ominous intro, Michigan's DAKHMA launch into an erratic black metalcrust assault with searing female leads. "Rot" start with an intro that is supposed to lead into a calculated epic crust track… but these punks just ride a manic blast into a windmill inducing breakdown. Heavy. No nuance here, they just punish you, and while the shit is a little rough around the edges sometimes, there's an edge and a ferocity that you can't fake. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, dakhma.bandcamp.com)

DANNY WHITTEN'S VEINS – The band's name is weird, the music is weird and I felt like I was on drugs while listening. Experimental noise punk but with more structure. They've got a really heavy feel, fuzzed out guitars, and the vocalist sounds like he's over life. My favorite song is "Sex Starved" where they break out into a rock "jam" mid-song. The second song, "Tick the Boxes" is seven minutes long and a little unnecessary, but kind of gives you a glimpse into how they probably write songs together. This one's for the weirdos. (Vanessa) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, majorcrimes.bandcamp.com)

DARK THOUGHTS – I mean, you're called DARK THOUGHTS so I'm really excited to sink into the darkness with this one. Oh, I was way off track! This is poppy Lookout Records type stuff. This Philly three-piece delivers great energy and catchy changes. Lyrics focus on misunderstood love, lost love, drug-free addiction and crime fantasies. "I Get By" is a touching memoir about a relationship with a parent. It's an abrasive coming of age story and sincerely moving. And just like that, it's all over. I admit, I was drawn into the melancholy rhythms of DARK THOUGHTS and glad they dropped me off where they did. No bullshit, straightforward pop punk without being so sweet it gives you cavities. For fans of the RAMONES. (Jason) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, c/o World Gone Mad Records, aaronjm@epix.net)

DISXEASE – *Demo 2013* – With members of I SHOT CYRUS, DISCARGA, and INFECT involved, you shouldn't be too surprised by what DISXEASE from São Paulo is able to accomplish. This tape has six songs of fast and tight hardcore with breakdowns around every corner. While straightedge in vein (and name), the lyrics—all in English for this release—are as often political as they are personal, but always written with a tone of caustic spite; I can appreciate that. (Shit) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, c/o Flophouse Tapes, 1326 Newton St. NE, Washington, DC 20017)

FAMILY SECRETS – Super-fast, male-fronted hardcore punk from Chicago. Most of this is fairly basic, but what sells it for me is the ultra-frantic, breakneck drumming throughout these 6 songs. It's relentless. Vocals are pissed and direct. Bare bones and solid. (Greg) (6-song tape, lyrics included, familysecretschi@gmail.com)

FATIGUE – *Dog Bodies* – I saw this band play in San Francisco recently and I was hooked within one minute. This shit is simply just ugly, fucked up punk incorporating elements of '70s punk, some UK82 bullshit and a little bit of Oi!. It sounds like a bad mood…like throwing idiots through walls… like not giving a fuck about anything…like eating glass and spitting blood in your enemy's face. I mean, what more do you want?! Features members of YOUNG OFFENDERS, CAGED ANIMAL and SYDNEY DUCKS, so it should be obvious that these motherfuckers know what they're doing. (Greg) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, fatiguesf.bandcamp.com)

FLUFFERS – Really strong punk with a heavy garage influence from Berlin. The song ideas are simple with succinct hooks and reverbed production. The single-note guitar lines, appropriately placed backup vocals, and intentional variety of drum beats give this a really spacious and open feel—much different and more interesting than most things "garage" hit with the "garage" tag. Lately, I've felt that songwriting is everything. Fortunately, FLUFFERS are really interested in that. All guitar and vocal melodies are very intentional and create really memorable hooks. The choruses on "Kill the Wait" and "Foreign Man" are as timeless as '80s pop songs by bands like FLOCK OF SEAGULLS or MODERN ENGLISH. Please don't misunderstand me—this is not to say that this sounds anything like those groups. They just stick in your head in the same undeniably catchy way. Seriously, it's so good I wish that they had repeated those choruses like sixteen times at the end so I didn't have to keep rewinding. Not every song had this effect on me, but it's all more than solid. A well rounded listen, and highly recommended! (Matt) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, fluffers@gmx.de, chiesaram@yahoo.com)

FUCKING – *Live Hardcore* – FUCKING is a powerviolence racket. Take a few parts DEAD KENNEDYS, CHARLES BRONSON, MAN IS THE BASTARD and daka-daka-daka/pssh-pssh-pssh beats and toss it all in a blender. This is live hardcore for the strong of stomach and heart. All go, no slow, as they say. It almost sounds like they are on that ride The Rotor and are going to keep spinning these songs until everyone barfs. Success. The lyrics are bad "pun's not dead": "Sugar / Children of the corn syrup / In the raw / Saccharine / Just like honey / I need more molasses." Fucking sweet. There are a few breakdowns toward the end. This is fucking good. (Jason) (16-song cassette, lyrics included, 3036 Elliot Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55407, thepower.thepassion@gmail.com, fuckingpunks.bandcamp.com)

GAS STATION OF LOVE – *Brown Tongues Are No Different Than The Pink Ones* – Weird fukkn bedroom psych/noise with brief bursts of drum machine driven shit-fi punk. The final track opens with the lyrics "California Pretentious" sung to the tune of a famous DEAD KENNEDYS song and I figure it's this kind of irreverence and "fuck you" that keeps me listening. From the same group of mutants that brought A DISCO FOR FERNS into our lives, and I encourage them to keep it weird and to keep not giving a fuck. (Robert) (5-song CD-R, no lyrics, $3 ppd c/o Evans, 323 Chimney Rock #914, Tyler, TX 75703)

GLORY DAYS – The anger is there and so are the loud instruments, but the guitar riffs on this tape made me laugh out loud! Street punk from Poland that's about as original as the band's name. Anyone who just picked up a guitar or is bad could probably play along to this tape. I would put this band into the category of "sell out rock." Catch them on a big stage at some giant festival. (Vanessa) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, glorydayspunk@gmail.com)

THE GROGGIES – *Fighting Fatigue* – Just meat and potatoes punk rock. Three chords and a healthy dose of rock'n'roll from the guitar, and harsh vocals trying harder than they should to be in tune (which is to say that I think they are more restrained than they should be). Fiery and to the point. "Excuse" is my fave track—ten songs in thirteen minutes. (Robert) (10-song CD-R, lyrics not included, c/o 75 Leslie Ave., Barrie Ontario, L4N 9P3 Canada, thegroggies.bandcamp.com)

THE ILLS – *Tuning Out* – Sounds like Victoria Jackson started a bar band. These are fun and catchy lyric. The ILLS have so masterfully set the bar somewhere around the torso. No band, I repeat, no band, is as adequate as this. What we have here is the Gap clothing of bands. The Bud Light of rock songs. I mean sure, there's something out there with more unique flavor but, this is here, and it's cheap. So easy to consume and the lowest of impact resistance. Rad BRATMOBILE cover and the lyrics to "Taco Nite" are priceless. (Jason) (15-song cassette, lyrics not included, experienceshake.com)

INDONESIAN JUNK – This demo is Daniel (CHINESE TELEPHONES / RAMMA LAMMA) doing everything on his own and pumping out a few cuts of primitive power-punk that has some moments that feel like they're influenced by CHEAP TRICK and GOLDEN EARRING. Most of the influences sound like they're coming from that era along with some late '70s punk stalwarts like DEAD BOYS and early DAMNED. Sounds good, but also feels like it's still finding

its footing. I'm looking forward to the future. (Greg) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, indonesianjunkpunk.com)

INTERCOURSE – These dudes come from Connecticut and play hardcore that's a little noisy and has a few traces of JESUS LIZARD in the mix. Some of the songs do a good job of leaving the hardcore realm and going into a tight, deep, weirdo prog zone that suits them well. Shit is pissed! The best song title is "Abominable Buzz Kill" (Greg) (7-song tape, lyrics included, 24 Rockland Ave, Waterbury, CT 06708, rickahmed@gmail.com)

IRON BORN – *Crimes Against Humanity* – Tough hardcore: barked vocals, chugga chugga breakdowns, you know. I confess that despite my soft spot for ignorant hardcore, IRON BORN seem a little forced… even the parts when they kill it (and there are plenty) are still not confident. That's what demos are for, I guess, because when these fools get dialed, I have a feeling it will be crushing. Also, I fucking hate Danzig. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, ironborn.bandcamp.com)

IRON CHIC – *Spooky Action* – Super perfect post-9/11 America Americana feel-good indie rock that sounds like it's from the heyday of Matador Records. This does absolutely nothing for me but I have a feeling this band already has a pretty big following. If your idea of a great show is ooh-wee-yeah-bee-bopping with all your friends at the Independent pick up this milquetoast cheek-pincher. Really dope RAMONES and BUTTHOLE SURFERS covers, anthemic and aggro respectively. There's also a M*A*S*H intro for a bit… Nice. On the other side, their electroclash/synthpunk Nintendo MIDI file songs are totally awesome. There's a Super Mario Brothers sample in there: the music when you run outta plumbers. Just bleeps and beats, no vocals. This tape is like two completely different bands. Cool. (Jason) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, c/o Dead Broke, deadbrokerecords.com)

IRRSINN – Here comes some Swiss punk-as-fuck crucial political crust done right. I'm so impressed by the white-on-black screened cover with Velcro closure sleeve. There are certainly some stoner elements to the songs but they all remain gritty and grind. These anti-fascist bike-riding bastards are all over the Skuld Records sound of yesteryear. Everyone gets in on the vokills, from the *Gruesome Twosome* to a witchy sound. Is that a Clive Owen sample I hear? Definitely recommended for fans of AXIOM, YDINTUHO from Finland, and those looking for a modern take on that unearthed punk style with some '70s doom metal breaks. (Jason) (6-song cassette with screen-printed canvas sleeve, lyrics included, irrsinn.bandcamp.com)

KNOWN ABUSER – Bombastic visceral hardcore with vocals that will put you on edge. Friends of the breakdown, KNOWN ABUSER are pushing the lines while somehow managing to remain within them, but their delivery is so chaotic and the recording is so tweaked that it seems a disservice to simply classify them as USHC. But hardcore is exactly what they are…just really, really filthy. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, letsgodosomecrimes.com)

THE LOPEZ – *Travel Fast* – Wonderfully chaotic lo-fi recordings from this Pittsburgh, PA duo. Catchy rhythms and cool female (some male, too) vocals buried in a layer of noise. There are elements of post-punk, No Wave, experimental rock and Riot Grrrl. It occasionally gets arty, but it never gets boring. "Cubito Aequet" is the standout song with a steady driving beat and sing-along vocals. The feedback adds to the overall delight of the song. You can dance to it. I couldn't stop listening to it again and again. (Carolyn) (12-song cassette, lyrics not included, thelopeztheband.com)

THA MANTS – A mant is a man with an ant head, in case you were wondering and this band is a sort of garage rock sci-fi themed group based around "mant themes." Whether or not I recommend this tape relies solely on whether that sounds really cool or stupid to you. The music comes across just fine, but the concept seems like it would appeal more to me live. (Matt) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, experienceshake.com/mants)

THE MUFF DIVERS – Some dude from the band NANCY got together with another dude and a drum machine to make this four-song power-punk blazer. This shit is hyper-fast with high-pitched vocals and recalls some late '70s / early '80s power-pop and glam. Some parts of it sound like the DICKIES on fast-forward and I cannot complain about that. Dumb name, but this shit rules. (Greg) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, eatthelife.bigcartel.com)

NANCY – *Rock N Rolls the 'FMU* – If you're not familiar with East Coast power poppers, NANCY, they play spastic, hyperkinetic, catchy, wild punk that sounds like it could've been on one of those *Powerpearls* compilations. This tape catches the dudes on a live set from WFMU. The sound, like most live sets I've heard from WFMU, is top notch and the performance is really energetic and a little raw in all the right ways. There's a live interview on the B-side and it sounds like it was fun for them but, like many band interviews, it's useless and full of inside jokes that fall flat. Still, I'm glad they included it because I think it's important for posterity's sake. (Greg) (13-song cassette plus interview, lyrics not included, eatthelife.bigcartel.com)

NEW JUNK CITY – I know this is hard for all you true punks to imagine, but work with me here: What if jocular college boy alternative melodic punk was actually good? Atlanta's NEW JUNK CITY is not my thing (at all), but fukk me if it isn't absolutely great… jangly and filled with hooks, but with an edge (an edge that detracts from the strength of their songs, in my opinion). I feel like people who love AGAINST ME! will probably eat this shit up…which is kinda scary because I only like that major label sell-out AGAINST ME! record and think all of the "punk" ones pretty much suck, so what does that say about me? I guess it says that it's a good thing I don't really care. Good fukkn tape. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, muckmanrecords.bandcamp.com)

NOTCHES – *Normal Demo* – Melodic WEEZER meets JAWBREAKER fuzzed out college radio punk. Total '90s rehash, and really well done. (5-song cassette, no lyrics, notchesnh.bandcamp.com)

OHMU / STRUGGLING BEACONS FADING HEADLIGHTS / SVATVIT – *Tour 2013* – Three bands doing various noise/electronic projects. I don't normally listen to this sort of thing, but from my perspective, I like to envision these compositions in the context of movie soundtracks. SVATVIT is extremely harsh and scratchy on their track. It's an elongated ten-minute soundscape that would best accompany a bad dream montage influenced by dark images from Joel-Peter Witkin's art or the movie Seven. SBFH demonstrates a much more controlled and ambient strand of noise that would complement more of a sci-fi or outer space film. OHMU pairs live drums with the electronics, giving it a steady beat to bob to. The drums help guide me through an otherwise incoherent mess that my hook / pop / rock indoctrinated brain doesn't want to be patient for. I find it all pretty unappealing to listen to, but I can appreciate the wide spectrum of interpretations that noise artists/fans can find through this style. (Matt) (6-song CD-R, lyrics not included, epilepticmedia@gmail.com, andreaschristianhaslauer.blogspot.com)

RECESSIONS – Dark hardcore from PDX by some folks from Missoula's ASS END OFFEND. The sound is a pretty natural extension of AEO, but strongly recalls FROM ASHES RISE or even '90s hardcore like ECONOCHRIST (a great rhythm section/basslines). It's too straightforward to be "epic crust" and more interesting rhythmically than most other bands that attempt this style. It's one of those genres that I sort of subconsciously left behind once there were so much generic and downright bad versions of it. To my ears, this sounds great now, indicating that any old overdone style can still sound strong again with a fresh breath. (Matt) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, recessionspdx@gmail.com)

ROCHELLE ROCHELLE – Sometimes bands try to be weird just to distinguish themselves from the glut of supposed essential mediocrity that fills our punk ears on a regular basis. "Look!! Listen!! We are just as shitty and generic as all those other bands but we are weird!! That makes us special! Talk about us on the internet!!" But sometimes, and it doesn't happen often, you hear a band and you think *man, what the fukk are these monkeys doing? I want to keep listening until I figure it out, but until I do….fukk it, I just want to keep listening.* Enter: ROCHELLE ROCHELLE. Space age chilled out '80s alternative rock deconstructed… with reggae guitars. Dude, so weird, and so exactly what I wanted—though I'm glad they just gave it to me since there's no fukkn way I could have explained it to them. I don't even know if this is punk (and I don't care), but it's presence in a punk rag is punk as fukk, and I can hear some of these tracks in John Hughes montages. So weird… so right. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, muckmanrecords.bandcamp.com)

XSAXONX – *II* – I wouldn't say run out and get this, but if you like sXe hardcore, you'll want to track this down. All the songs are a minute or less and I kept hitting rewind after listening to the song "Let It Go." The lyrics are political and you can actually hear what the vocalist is singing about on most songs, which is rare these days. Hardcore. Straightedge. Yeah. (Vanessa) (11-song cassette, lyrics included, x4298x@gmail.com, xsaxonx.bandcamp.com)

SHINING WIRES – Ugh! No, no, no. '90s pop punk with hoarse vocals from Denver. I can't ever hear anything new or fresh when I hear bands do this style. It's always the same familiar JAWBREAKER-esque melodies. I know it will probably disappoint many of you out there, but I just never liked that stuff, especially JAWBREAKER. I acknowledge their significance and the soul in their music, especially within the context of the time and place, but I just can't stand it. And that's pretty much how I feel about this tape. The melodies are

smooth and well executed, and SHINING WIRES is actually a great band, but I just can't endorse the sounds I hear. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, snappylittlenumbers.blogspot.com)

SHIT BLIMP – Fucking SHIT BLIMP! They're from Ohio, they're fucking pissed and they play ugly ass hardcore. No frills. No bullshit. It's some basic meat and potatoes kind of shit that doesn't take itself too seriously but seriously gets the job done. I'm a little tired of hardcore bands putting hella reverb on their vocals, but I honestly can't tell if this band is using reverb or if they're just recording in an echoy-ass room. Either way, I'm down. Five songs in much less than five minutes. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, 4890 Deer Run Road, Lorain, OH 44053, ridetheshitblimp@gmail.com)

SILVER SHADOWS – Heavy COCTEAU TWINS and SIOUSXIE SIOUX influences is what I hear from this band from SF. They have the ethereal quality of the former and the darkness of the latter. Beautiful harmonies in the vocals (or maybe the reverb is turned up) and the keyboards and guitars sound like rain hitting tin. The production on this tape is so good, like Phil Spector's wall of sound but less creepy. Most of the current bands that tried to do the post-punk thing bored me to death but there's something about SILVER SHADOWS that soothes my soul. The songs are bright and eerie and make me feel like I'm floating on clouds. My favorite track is "M.P." and yes, I just listened to it ten times in a row. So freakin' good. (Vanessa) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, findsilvershadows@gmail.com, silvershadows1.bandcamp.com)

SLEEPTALKER – This new band from Buffalo plays simplistic, raging punk with most of the guitar lines played as a clean jangle accompanied by crashing drums. The singer alternates between bored and spirited in a way that suits the band well. Some of the guitar work reminds me of a punker, more simplistic PRIESTS. Good shit. (Greg) (5-song tape, lyrics not included, sleeptalkerzzz.bandcamp.com)

SOFTLINES – Here's some more jangly pop from Buffalo and it rules. It's simple and direct, but gets the job done. I'm hearing some hints of SEBADOH and Sacramento's BRIGHT IDEAS, but still maintaining a punk energy, like St Louis' TIMES BEACH. Some might call this a sleeper hit because every song on this tape sounds deceptively simple but manages to lodge itself in your brain. One of the better tapes I've heard this month. (Greg) (7-song tape, lyrics not included, softlines.bandcamp.com)

SPERM – *Nightmare Life* – See the above review, but I think this tape is even better than this year's follow-up. Proof that you can sound all weird and mysterious and still write insanely good songs. Not really sure why it's taken these tapes so long to grace this section of *MRR* (this banger is one year old already), but better late than never. Get this. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, c/o 223 Lafayette Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14213, spermbuffalo.bandcamp.com)

SPERM – *Yahweh Brings Us to This Hell* – One of the best demos I've heard all month—ferocious guttural hardcore that's as noisy and fukkd as it is completely unique sounding. Vocals are tweaked all over the place, music is a muddled glorious mess and it sounds like one of the guitars is manipulated but it might just be out of tune. Massive sound, injecting gratuitous amounts of noise rock into your daily dose of hardcore brutality. Bravo, kids. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, c/o 223 Lafayette Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14213, spermbuffalo.bandcamp.com)

STAPLES IN CARPET – STAPLES IN CARPET are a punk-metal hybrid band from Seattle. Gruff vocals and some breakdowns. Over-processed guitars and a snare drum tuned really high. It sounds like a shitty bar on a Wednesday. Bleh! (Greg) (8-song CD, lyrics not included, soundcloud.com/staplesincarpet)

STONECHAT – *Bacco* – This is the very embodiment of a musical harsh toke. Quirky art/indie meets emo and forms a math rock band, like fIREHOSE took a wrong turn in 1993 and never checked the map. Keyboards, jerky/nerdy rhythms and a guitar player who can play better than you want to be able to play. STONECHAT are a lot, too much for this guy, I'm afraid. It sounds like a hippie carnival threw up on my basement punk. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, floatawaydangling.bandcamp.com)

SURPRISE PARTY – *Heart of Love* – Do you like psych rock? I don't. This tape made me boycott demo reviews last month. Eleven indie rock songs all about love. These guys are from Canada. I like songwriting that I can relate to, and I couldn't with this. This band just wants to get laid. "C'mon baby take off your shoes / Took her to the tent and we drowned in booze." That sounds really sketchy to me. (Vanessa) (11-song cassette, lyrics not included, surpriseparty420.bandcamp.com)

SYMPTOM – *Break the Chain of Daily Life* – This tape opens with a perfectly crasher crust intro into "Numb," the first of seven tracks. The crasher elements appear intermittently throughout, while blown-out D-beat hardcore fills the gaps. There are enough changes and memorable leads to keep things interesting for the full ten minutes of so of *Break the Chain*. The tape includes a GAUZE cover to close it out, about which the band admonishes "If you don't have the record [*Equalizing Distort*] you can just find it on the internet or kill yourself." Boston's SYMPTOM includes members of WKSJ? and that should signify their ability to commit to a sound and spirit. I want to see this live very badly while drunk. (Shit) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, symptompunk@gmail.com)

TANK – The first thing that came to mind while listening to the intro of this reissue of the 2006 TANK demo was the ambiance-building intro "Confusion" on DOOM'S *Fuck Peaceville* compilation and I would venture to guess that that was their inspiration. Interesting progressive rock measures reflect off of '80s thrash metal such as SACRED REICH or the crustier riffing of MUNICIPAL WASTE. NEGATIVE APPROACH-style vocals fill out the tape with punk metal moments like G-ANX with some clobbering moments, and thoughtfully placed blast beats. Heavy genuine hardcore going on here and I'm glad to hear of this band eight years after the fact. (Jason) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, blackdotsbuffalo.blogspot.com)

TREE BLOOD – As a concept, this is pretty cool. Band self-releases a series of three-song cassettes and then makes an LP out of all of them. I like it. The music is cool, too. Massive sounding and dark, TREE BLOOD put the emphasis on the vibe and the sonic power. The riffs don't get stuck in my head but the sound of that low end sure as shit does, and the howling KARP-esque vocals are a total winner. Several notches above "solid." (Robert) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, c/o 3228 3rd Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55408, treeblood.bandcamp.com)

VAMPIRES – *Every Kind of Light* – The tape starts with a delicate guitar intro. The fuzzed out strings and '90s licks remind me of SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE-era Sub Pop era bands. The vocals are cool, slightly muffled and like an older Joey Ramone. It's all catchy and not too distracting for being a very indie rock release, a genre that can easily cross over into obnoxious regions. I definitely like this and appreciate their echoed hypnotic tones like DEAD MEADOW or ACROSS TUNDRAS. I almost want the vocals to be even more distorted and dreamy like MY BLOODY VALENTINE. Some notes are not easy to hit, so why bother? The VAMPIRES music is great. Bonus points for "Winnipeg Song" as I've always thought of there as a well-described crust punk town. VAMPIRES, you are the cozy polar bear among the black metal. (Jason) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, vampiresband.bandcamp.com)

VIBE WRECKER – Punk that's only to be played in a basement. Songs about getting an apartment, a turd pool, and hating cops. The artwork on the tape insert is cool and so are the lyrics. One of the better bands to come out of Canada, that's for sure. (Vanessa) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, vibewrecker.bandcamp.com)

WILD HEX – *II* – You know that kind of rock'n'roll punk that's real sharp and slick but still too good to really ignore even if you don't super dig on it? Like ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT or something like that? Well that's WILD HEX. This shit is screaming, smart songs with catchy (snotty) garage punk vocals hiding beneath a rolling fuzzed out bass and a monster drummer. And the guitars are just dirty and *loud* and awesome. They don't sound like ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT but it's the same kind of full throttle attack as them (or maybe TURBONEGRO) and the hooks are there. Yeah, these kids are legit, and I bet they party. (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, donttouchmyrecords.bigcartel.com)

V/A – *Punk in the Streets Vol. 2* – Fifteen band comp of fist-in-the-air punk, much of which falls in the snotty melodic hardcore category. QUINCY PUNX (Are they still a band? Really?), DAMN BROADS, the CONVICTS, and REVOLT are the standouts for me, though I confess that a lot of the content here ventures far enough into RANCID territory that I have little interest. (Robert) (15-song CD-R, lyrics not included, viciousmistressrecords.com)

V/A – *Shake/Arama '14* – Shake! Records is trying to do what Burger Records is doing. They're releasing garage, indie, and psych rock tapes by good-looking young people *for* good-looking young people and frankly, I don't like it. This comp is a release from their first ever Shake/Arama fest in Canada where this label is based out of. Not all of the songs are bad, but when I picture myself at this fest I just know I would hate everyone involved. College kids, wannabe flower children, bros and leftovers from Coachella. I would rather be trapped on a crowded MUNI bus during rush hour traffic with half-naked bums and their dogs. (Vanessa) (32-songs, lyrics not included, experienceshake.com, records@experienceshake.com)

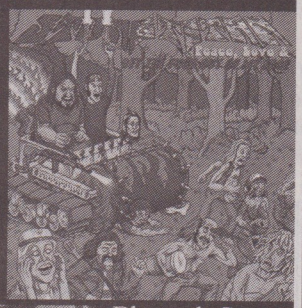
Iron Hand
Injected Fear lp
Heavy crust punk, d-beat hardcore

"This is a definite must for the fan of crust, but it also contains enough appeal for any person who likes the dirtier side of punk."
(verbicide)

limited press run vinyl
45 RPM

Stone Titan
'Peace, Love, & Get The Fuck Out Of My Face' EP
brutal sludge/doom -

"It's heavy, feedback-filled, and in your fucking face."
(theneedledrop)



Limited press run, random colored vinyl, 45 RPM

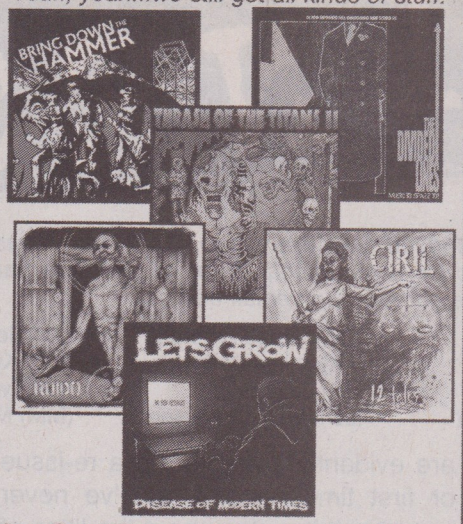
Blessed State
Head Space lp
Western MA melodic punk

"equal parts 80's Revolution Summer style hardcore/punk and post punk"
(Manic Compression)

Limited press run vinyl
45 RPM

+safety meeting
safetymeeting.net

Yeah, yeah...we still got all kinds of stuff.



Lets Grow "Disease of Modern Times" LP
Ruido s/t LP
Ciril "12 Tales" LP
V/A "Thrash of the Titans 2" LP
Bring Down The Hammer s/t CD
The Divided Lines "Music To Spazz To" 7"
Larkin "Reckoning" CD
Ciril "Hysteria Driven" LP/CD
Meet The Virus s/t CD
Scarred For Life "Born Work Die" LP/CD
Dead Man's Choir "She Don't Like It" 7"
Insult "I Wanna Be A Burn Victim" CD

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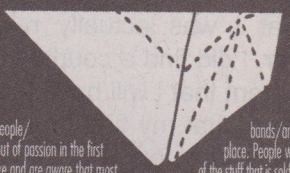
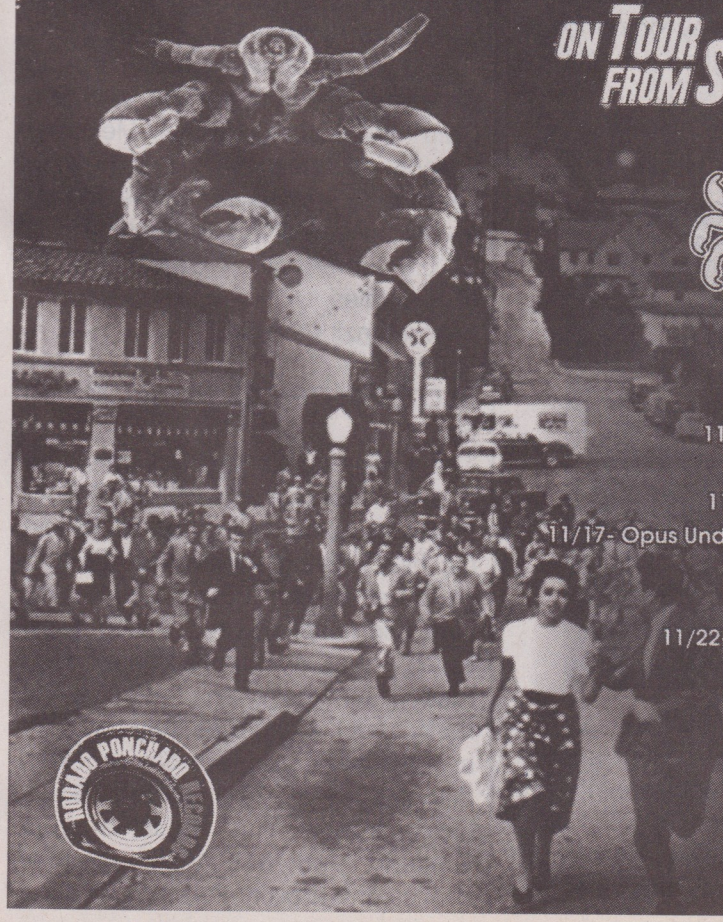


We like to meet people/ bands/art/sport/etc. that do what they do out of passion in the first place. People who believe in a underground culture and are aware that most of the stuff that is sold nowadays under that flag is total crap only made to make money. And, if you feel you can write and relate, get in touch. To put it with Fugazi's words:

"NEVER MIND WHAT THEY'RE SELLING- IT'S WHAT YOU ARE BUYING"



ON TOUR FROM SPAIN

Mamá Ladilla

11/14- Firehouse 13th- Providence, RI with Chin Strap
11/15- Geno's, Portland, ME
11/16- Midway Café (matinee) Boston, MA with FU's
11/17- Opus Underground - Salem, MA with NOTOX, Empty Vessels, Los Bungalitos

11/21- basement show, Allston, MA
11/22- The Grand Victory, Brooklyn, NY with La Armada, FU's

www.mamaladilla.com
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New EP Bilis on sale at www.interpunk.com

ZINES

Send zines for review to: ***MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146****. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, and email address.*

Reviewers A-Z by initial:
(AG) Allison Gaye
(AP) Ari Perezdiez
(DG) Dan Goetz
(DV) Diana Vashti
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EC) E. Conner
(FU) Ray Suburbia
(GA) Grace Ambrose
(JA) Juliana Almeida
(JB) Julia Booz
(JD) Justin Davisson
(JM) Jeff Mason
(KC) Kyle Canyon
(LA) Lydia Athanasopoulou
(MM) Marissa Magic
(MP) Max Power
(OG) Oscar Gutierrez
(SF) Sami Fink
(VX) Vanessa Asswipe

AB & DWELLING PORTABLY SUPPLEMENTS / free with zine order / 4 pgs

I had a very difficult time understanding what I was actually reviewing. However, I did find a couple of pages with content that I will base this off of. I must say that my first problem was particularly the format of how all of this was put together. Not only did the zine "supplements" not make what I was actually reading directly clear, but the content itself was dense and did not introduce the project whatsoever. There was some stuff on identifying why police often lie, and other content on eating a plant-based diet. In fact, as I look at this I am still not sure whether I am simply only looking at a preview of an actual zine, or the zine itself. This could simply be a misunderstanding on my part, but for now, I will stand with this being pretty terrible. (OG)
no info

AIN'T IT PHUN! #0 / free / single page

If anything, this has a real first wave of zines look with just typewriter-ish font and a third generation copied photo of the Dead Boys. So, minimalism is key but even with this the cut off text doesn't help. There are mentions of editor/creator Earwig's old band from the '70s, called the Lames, who apparently were some kinda proto-punk band from San Diego (and who I couldn't find jackshit about, minus some 2008 thread on *Terminal Boredom* debating whether or not the record on eBay at the time was "fake or not"). Other parts of this talk about hyper-obscure San Diego bands who are evidently going to get a re-issue or first time release, as I've never seen anything else about the likes of the Crooks, Cinnamon Imperials or Mya the Bee. Somewhere in all of this there's some talk about sex and "send your ladies' (panty) hos to Gravity Records." Huh? Then it goes into talk about starting a pagan-ish political party called "the Monster Party" that would be very anarchist centered. Earwig somehow gets back to music by way of a review of a movie called *Monster Party on Wheels.* Finally, there are some instructions on some kind of role-playing game called "Swords of Death". This is way, way too rambling, and more confusing than it is actually interesting. (JD)
Ryan Eifert / 04494-8 Unit 10 / PO Box 7001 / Atascadero, CA 93423

ARTCORE #32 / £5.50 / 36 pgs

Welly has done it again—another essential issue of long-running zine out of Wales, brimming with interviews, pictures, reviews and more! If you don't already know this zine, now would be the time to pick it up as this issue is killer! There're interviews with Zero Boys' Paul-Z, Poison Idea's legendary singer Jerry A, a reprint from *NME* circa 1979 about LA punk (a snarky but enlightening read), a short Q&A with Sothira from Crucifix in light of the 30th anniversary of the release of *Dehumanization,* New Jersey's early hardcore heroes Adrenaline O.D., Australia's early punk rockers Celibate Rifles, and an eight-page roundtable of sorts, where various members of '80s Norwegian hardcore bands discuss their influences and more. All this, plus interviews with prolific Static Shock Records, melodic hardcore's new kids on the block Grand Collapse and Young Conservatives from the UK, and Zero Gain and Lobster Killed Me from France. Comes with the Human Therapy EP reviewed in the record review section of this issue. (LA)
27 Llantarnam Rd. / Cardiff / CF14 3EF / Wales, UK /
artcorefanzine.co.uk

BLOTCHOUTS / $2, trades OK / 50 pgs

The future sucks and so does the present. This is a zine with six fictional stories about being forced to join the hive, having a machine glued to your arm, having to deal with healthcare and hospitals, and talking dogs, which are always funny. While I don't read fiction too often, these stories really struck a chord as they read like a critique of modern-day society, though they all flow together like a lucid dream. The artist is from Oakland and has included mini comics and artwork that they've done

for their music projects at the end of this zine. Recommended if you're sick of seeing people walk around like zombies with their heads down looking at their phones. Especially recommended if you're one of those people. (VX)
Jacob McCann / 972 Stanford Ave. / Oakland, CA 94608 / yacobdafisk@hotmail.com

BORN INTO THIS #1 / contact author for copies / 54 pgs
I had a hard time reading this zine, but not because it was poorly written or disinteresting—quite the opposite. I had no idea what to expect, but I was pleasantly surprised to find a thoughtful collection of musings on trauma and abuse. As a survivor of various shitty things the world has to offer, I found that some articles resonated with my own thoughts and experiences and others offered new perspectives that I had not considered before (in particular, the article on police interactions from a paramedic's point of view was interesting to me). This zine is not light reading by any stretch of the imagination, especially if you have dealt with trauma and/or abuse, but it is absolutely worth checking out if contemplating these issues is something you are interested in. (SF)
visionoffire@yahoo.com

COGNITIVE SURPLUS: A STRAIGHT EDGE HARDCORE ZINE / £2 / 66 pgs
Quite a fitting name. I don't see that many people having middle-of-the-road opinions about this geeky-as-hell UK straightedge zine: nerds who love esoteric hardcore jokes and things like illustrated profiles of "old hardcore dude" prototypes (and anyone who likes Good Clean Fun, of course) will likely love it, and those who can't stand youth crew or earnestness will cringe so hard their neck and shoulders will get sore. The only musical content in here is a few pages of shotgun write-ups of straightedge bands from around the globe; most of it is assorted musings, manifestos, how-to's (both serious/practical and irreverent), lists, and so forth, often interspersed with lyrical references. Some of the jokes are certainly funnier than others, but at the heart of it all is someone who loves the shit out of straightedge hardcore, warts and all, and is using the fanzine medium to put forth what he loves and hates about it, and where he wants it to go. (DG)
ragetolive.bigcartel.com

DANGER UNHEARD / $1.50 / 31 pgs
From the entity that brought you *Cats Hate Cops* comes a collaboration with Kerri Radley, of *Deafula* zine. While this publication uses R&D's archival platform, it expands upon it with personal history and investment. In *Deafula*, Kerri writes often about being a deaf person in society, her tribulations and her triumphs. This collaboration focuses on the bleaker side of the plight of deaf people's experiences of police brutality. Using news clips that seem extracted from temporality, she asserts her conclusion bluntly: Now is not the time for trainings or reforms; now is the time to end the murderous system. (EC)
researchanddestroy@riseup.net/ researchdestroy.com

FINALE 95 #3 / $2 / 26 pgs
Writing a diary is a very healthy and positive creative outlet, and while I may seem like a very catty and mean older girl I really don't want to read any kid's self styled "Bildungsroman" about what they see as their summer of self discovery and transition from senior year to university. (AG)
Alannna Why c/o Martin Trophies / 2062 St. Joseph Blvd / Ottawa, ON/ KIC IE6 / Canada

THE FIFTH ESTATE: ART & ANARCHY Fall/Winter 2014 / $4 / 47 pgs
The Fifth Estate is a lot like a try-hard "cool dad" trying desperately to be relevant and appearing doubly uncool in the process. This is a reputable anarchist publication that discusses Burning Man and devotes a whole page to anarchist puppets! I accept that I am totally pretentious but that doesn't negate the fact that this is some corny bullshit. The sex work in Rio article was pretty badass, but even that was prefaced with a Sting lyric. Destroy all art and free Marius Mason. Marie Mason #04672-061, FMC Carswell, Federal Medical Center, PO Box 27137, Fort Worth, TX 76127. (Max)
PO Box 201016 / Ferndale, MI 48220

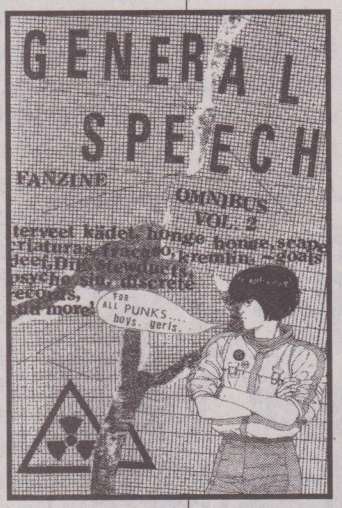
FIRST TOUR PROBLEMS #1 / $3, trades OK / 54 pgs
I went back and forth on this one several times. This seemed like it would be a good read despite what the title suggested. A punk's first tour zine is something I find very hard to find interesting these days. Now that every punk you've ever seen has been in a band, toured, and written about it, it's just no fun to hear about anymore. This had such an interesting possibility, though. Here was a Canadian punk woman sound tech who found herself with some metalcore dickheads on a grueling month-long US summer tour. As a punk, a sound guy, someone who has toured a lot, and as someone who already hates metalcore, I was stoked to read it. Unfortunately, there wasn't much to hold me. It's a really pretty quarter size zine with really cool artwork, a few colored pages and cover, but I think I expected so much more. Some of the stories were rad, but not as rad as I wanted them to be. This could have been what every girl who ever wanted to run sound should read.

This should have been an embarrassment to metalcore dudes everywhere, or at least every overpaid dude band that treats their road crew (and especially the female members) like shit. The dudes do come off as dicks, and so do some house sound guys in random cities, but we never hear her put anyone in their place, or stand her ground, or demand respect for being a badass. A good mini read; I just hoped for an extra punch. (DZ)
arevolutionofwords@gmail.com

GENERAL SPEECH OMNIBUS Vol. 2 / $6 ppd US, $9 ppd world/ 64 pgs
This is a collection of *General Speech* issues five through eight, with a new introduction and a few things removed to keep it more current. This thing is full of awesome interviews with: Terveet Kädet, Honge Honge, Scapegoats, Criaturas, Kremlin, DiE, Psycho Sin, Discrete Records, and a few more. You can tell that Thomas, who makes this zine and runs a label by the same name, is completely genuine in his love of all things punk. All of the writing comes off super sincere and uncontrived. There's a cool history lesson that talks about Watch from the Swankys getting a job at KFC as a Colonel Sanders mascot. There are also some cool reviews of his favorite Discrete Records releases. If you don't already have these issues of this zine, then I would definitely pick this up. While you're at it, check out his want list at the back and help him mark a few off. (KC)
PO Box 24842 / Lexington, KY 40524

IMANTZINE #1 and #2 / $5 plus shipping in US or Canada / 28 pgs and 16 pgs
Two issues of an annual zine commemorating the life of Hamilton, Ontario punk Imants Krumins, who passed away in 2011. The first issue delves into his extensive flyer collection, which begins with early gigs he attended in the '70s. Some of these good quality reproductions are worth the price alone—I'd kill to see some of these line-ups! Start saving your flyers now, you never know what's going to seem noteworthy twenty years down the line… The second issue is a group of recollections and reflections on Krumins' life from musicians and friends, as well as reproductions of pages of his zine (topics include the Velvet Underground and pro wrestling), his handwritten list of his desert island discs, and a scan of his Touch & Go classified want list. A touching tribute to a man who was an important part of his community and who is obviously missed by many. All proceeds benefit the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada. (GA)
hammercityrecords@gmail.com

THE MATCH #113 / free, cash donations, stamps / 72 pgs
I'm always excited to see a new issue of this long(!)-running anarchist journal. Consistent favorites such as the letters column, book reviews, obituaries, "Evil Empire Notes" and "Who the Police Beat," are complemented this time by a "Komputer-Stopper's Notebook" with advice for using the internet more privately. The focus on different technologies also appears in a piece comparing paper quality (among other aspects) of older issues of the British paper *Freedom*. There are long narratives recounting contributors' dealings with bullshit in various aspects of the shitsystem. Speaking of bullshit... One guy writes, "the most virulent sexism on the planet, equaling in intensity if not in effects (only because they don't have the power) the sexism in Muslim countries, is found in the 'feminist' community." In a world where men dominate political and economic power, I don't see how this could even be possible. Another piece, in the "Crap-Detection Department" looks at expanded expectations as to what consent in a sexual relationship entails, critiquing them as a precursor to "contracts and (it never fails)... bureaucracy.... To or by whom are the things 'required' required?" Uh, the people involved? "I hate to call anything that naïve kid anarchists do *crap*..." He says this will "never work," but I see it as a valuable pushback against the lack of communication on these issues. *The Match* is huge, printed by the editor, and available for a donation—I would hope at least three dollars, more if you can. (JM)
PO Box 3012 / Tucson, AZ 85702



MISHAP #33 / $1 or trade / 22 pgs
"Punk! Nerd!" This cover says it all. A zine dedicated solely to book reviews (37, to be exact). Hell yeah! Ryan Mishap covers fiction, non-fiction, graphic novels, and even some poetry (by accident). While the reviews aren't necessarily the most thorough and "professionally" critical, that's not really the point. The point is, books are awesome and if you need a few recommendations of interesting reads, Ryan's got you well covered! He likes books, and so should you! Also, there is a call for a Eugene, OR sci-fi/political/zine reading club. You're already reading a zine, so you probably have cast your pulpuslaceratophobia to the wayside, so read more and learn about what more to read! (FU)
PO Box 5841 / Eugene, OR 97405 / mishapzine@yahoo.com

TINTED WINDOWS #8 / SASE or stamp / 5 pgs
One sheet of paper collaged-up and folded into four mini pages with cut and paste sayings that are trying to be political or shocking. This reminded me of the clip art bible (magazine) *Craphound*. There are at least 20 skulls and terrified faces pasted inside. When you open the zine up, there's a nice poster for your wall. It made me wonder what other issues of *Tinted Windows* are like, but mostly I was left feeling confused. (VX)
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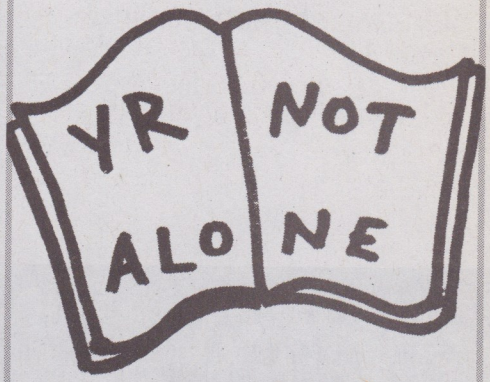

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